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SHIPS AND SAILORS

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As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

Fr. *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*

SHIPS AND SAILORS

TALES OF THE SEA

By

STANLEY ROGERS

Illustrated by the Author

George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd.
London Bombay Sydney

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THE AUTHOR TO THE READER

THE purpose of a preface is, I suppose, to warn the would-be reader what he is to expect in the pages that follow. Therefore let it be explained at the outset that these are old tales dressed up in new clothes, and beyond saying that no introduction seems necessary. But it may be added that by 'new clothes' I mean both the telling and the illustrating of the stories—particularly the latter. Though I have allowed myself a certain amount of latitude in the manner of making the drawings—taking advantage of artist's licence, shall we say?—yet the ships, scenes, and portraits can be taken as being as authentic as careful research could make them.

To assist the landsman reader to a better understanding of nautical expressions that seemed quite indispensable, a glossary has been included; for a sea story without phrases peculiar to the sea is like a dish of meat without salt. But the nautical word has not been used where another term would do quite as well, and for those who dislike referring to a glossary these stories may be read without once turning aside for reference.

S. R. H. R.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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For the journey of No. 1 boat from the *Trevessa*, *1700 Miles in Open Boats*, by Captain Cecil Foster; for the *Dreadnought* mutiny, Captain Samuel's own story; for the lives of certain eighteenth-century buccaneers, *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the most Notorious Pyrates*, by Captain Charles Johnson, first published in London in 1724; for the voyage of the *Tilikum*, Captain Voss's original account, published in Tokio in 1913; for the account of the *Florida* galleon, the records of the Clan MacLean; for the mutiny of the *Bounty* and the subsequent boat journey, Lieutenant Bligh's original report, published in London in 1790; and for the story of the loss of the *Endurance* and Shackleton's journey to South Georgia, his book *South*.

Thanks are due to William Atkin, Esq., editor of *Fore an' Aft*, for kindly supplying details of the mysterious loss of the *Leiv Eiriksson*.

S. R. H. R.

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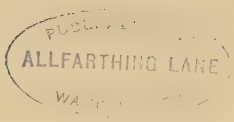
PART I
SHIPWRECKS



THE REFUGE

WALTHAMSTOW

CHAPTER I

The "Centaur" : The "Halswell" : The "Grosvenor"

WHEN we regard the stout masts of a ship, vast columns of pine four feet thick at the deck, we find it hard to imagine a puff of wind with force enough to snap such mighty posts off at their very base as if they were nothing more than so many wooden matches. Yet the wind, the gentle zephyr grown to a roaring lion, can snap off the stoutest mast ever built and girdled with iron as if it were but a slender reed. The story of H.M.S. *Centaur* is a graphic example of the power there is in a gale of wind when it really gets down to business.

After the decisive engagement in the West Indies on April 12, 1782, when the French fleet was defeated by Rodney, several of the victorious and the captured ships were either disabled or lost in a great gale that occurred during the homeward passage, when the fleet was sailing in a convoy. The *Centaur*, a seventy-four-gun ship which formed one of the convoy, left Jamaica in a leaky condition, and had to keep two hand-pumps going constantly,

a fact which made Captain Inglefield hope for fine weather during the passage, as he knew it would go hard with the ship if any heavy seas were met. But, like the barometer, his hopes fell when, on the evening of September 16, ominous ragged clouds covered the sky and the wind began to lash the waves up into what promised to be very rough seas later. As the weather grew worse he ordered the canvas to be reduced and the top gallant masts to be struck—*i.e.*, lowered—while in the meantime the crew had to take their turn at the hand- and chain-pumps. During the night, owing to the increasing force of the wind, the captain ordered all sail to be furled, which then left the ship under bare poles. Hardly had the order been carried out when a furious gust laid the *Centaur* over on her beam ends, and continued to keep her in that position while the sea forced itself through the cells of the ports from without. To save the ship Captain Inglefield instantly gave orders to cut away the main- and mizen-masts. When dire extremity calls for cutting away the masts it is first necessary to cut the stays that hold them; but when the men began to sever the small lanyards of the shrouds, preliminary to attacking the masts themselves, they had no sooner cut one lanyard of the main and two lanyards of the mizen than, with a loud report, the stays snapped in twain and both masts went overboard, as if the wind could wait no longer. The men were spared the labour and grief of having to chop at the masts of their own fine ship, and a moment or two later the fore-mast and bowsprit also went into the sea. The wind, being satisfied for the nonce, now allowed the distressed ship to right herself, though she swung back to an even keel with such violence that three guns broke loose on the main deck. They were secured after much labour; not, however, before they had done a great deal of damage and maimed some of the crew. Many of the officers had

come on deck in their nightshirts when the ship went on to her beam ends, and as their clothing got washed away they were forced to remain almost naked, as there were no more clothes to be had.

A few minutes after the masts had gone overboard another calamity came upon the ship. The rudder-head broke off short, and before the rudder could be secured it had slipped out of the trunk and was lost in the sea. Without a rudder the *Centaur* was in a worse plight than without masts, for she could not be kept head on to the seas, and must roll like a log in the trough of the waves. So they wallowed all that day at the mercy of wind and sea, and all through the night until the next day, when the weather slightly moderated.

At daylight two line-of-battle ships were seen which had been partially dismasted in the gale—a fact which made it difficult for the people on the *Centaur* to recognize what ships they were. Later in the morning another large vessel was sighted with all her masts standing. She was made out to be the *Ville de Paris*, and Captain Inglefield ordered a distress signal to be flown, union downward, on the stump of the mizen, which had broken off a few feet above the deck. One of the fo'c'sle guns was also fired, and this attracted the attention of the *Ville de Paris*, which then stood toward the derelict. Meanwhile other ships, merchantmen, had come up and offered their aid; but the *Centaur's* captain preferred the assistance of a naval ship, so after he had courteously declined their aid they sailed away, while he proceeded to wait for the *Ville de Paris* to sail down to him. But the condition of this ship was much worse than appearances suggested. She was behaving badly, and refused to wear down to within less than two miles of the *Centaur*, who then requested the *Ville de Paris* to remain with her until the weather moderated. The *Centaur* meanwhile was rolling so violently that it was

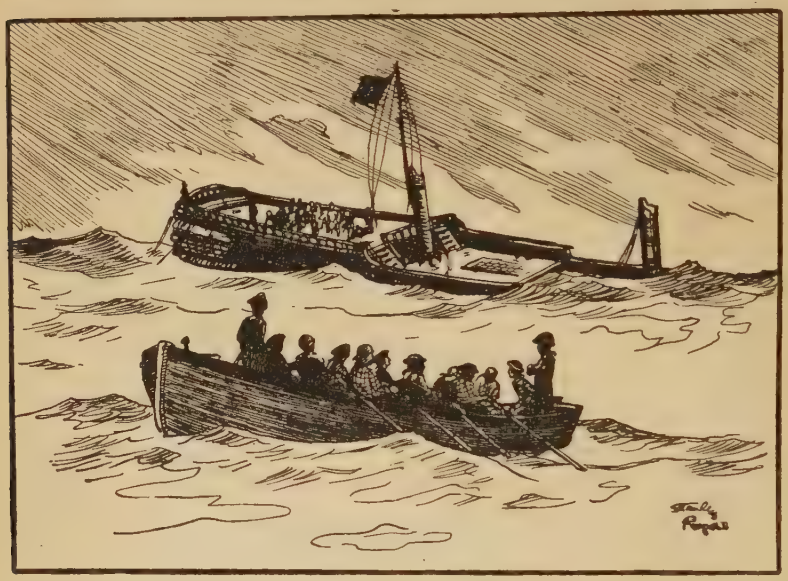
decided to heave all the main-deck guns overboard—all, at least, but six which had overturned when the ship went on her beam ends the first day and now could not be moved. The experiment of putting out a sea-anchor, constructed with a boom and several gun-carriages, was tried, but without any useful effect. During the night the wind increased and the sea rose, and in the morning the *Ville de Paris* was nowhere to be seen. The two ships had become separated in the darkness.

The plight of the *Centaur's* crew had become really serious. These were lonely seas; their last chance of help seemed gone; and their ship had now seven feet of water inside her. To make matters worse, the pumps were choked continually by coal that had broken loose and got into the bilges. Puncheons of rum and all of the provision casks were staved in and their contents lost, the rum mixing in a great salt-water punch in the hold. The fresh-water casks were below in the fore-hold, while above them was floating the rest of the ship's provisions, now, of course, soaked with sea-water. The pump leathers having worn out, there was nothing left but to bale the ship with buckets. Baling a great ship with buckets would seem ludicrously inadequate, yet the bucket brigade toiled with such vigour that for a while the incoming sea-water was checked, and even lowered a little. During the following night the weather blew up into a hurricane again, and it was thought that the ship would not swim till morning. However, daylight found the wreck still afloat, and hope revived. Some of the more resolute seamen succeeded in getting up from the flooded fore-hold a cask of fresh water, of which they were sorely in need. The capricious weather had again moderated, and shears were rigged for setting up a jury fore-mast. The seas had fallen considerably, so the pumps were once more started, and these by the next morning had succeeded

in clearing the fore-hold of water. The after-hold was also cleared of water, the rest of the guns were sent overboard, and during the day the jury fore-mast was set up and rigged, while some of the crew prepared a temporary rudder. If the moderate weather continued, Captain Inglefield hoped to have the ship sufficiently under control to be able to steer for the Western Islands the next day. That night the crew got some rest; but by the morning there were signs of more bad weather, and at noon another full gale was blowing. Water began to come into the ship anew, and as the pumps had finally got beyond repair baling was again resorted to. The old *Centaur* was labouring so badly that it was plain she was slowly going to pieces and could not last much longer. Another day passed with the same unceasing labour to keep the ship afloat. Those of the crew who were not baling were making extra canvas buckets so that they too might help. Even the officers stood in the hatchways, passing up full buckets and handing down empty ones.

On the morning of the 23rd it was seen that the ship was taking in water much faster, and also that she was floating very low by the head, the lower gun ports being level with the water. The two remaining anchors were cut adrift and dropped overboard to lighten the ship further, but all these efforts were puny, and in the end useless. Preparations for leaving the ship were begun. The three boats were got over the side, and a bag of bread and some liquor were put into each, while the boats' crews were divided. The sea was still running high, and one of the boats, the yawl, was smashed alongside the ship and sunk. By four o'clock the *Centaur* was so low that it appeared to be merely suspended in the water. An hour later the captain came on deck to find a number of the crew crowding into the pinnace. To secure it he called his shipmaster to follow him, and jumped into the boat,

which was perilously overcrowded. In the meantime some one had cast off the pinnace, which at once fell astern and became exposed to the force of the sea. The captain now found himself escaped from the ship, but the situation was no better than it was when they were aboard, for it seemed unlikely that the small pinnace could float for long



in such a sea. There were twelve men in a leaky boat with one gunwale stove in, and that in the middle of the Atlantic without compass, quadrant, sail, or great coat with which to make one. Every one was thinly clad, and the devil's own wind was blowing the tops of the rollers over the unhappy men. In half an hour they had lost sight of the ship, and just at dark a blanket was discovered in the boat. This was bent to an oar, and thus they were able to scud before the wind all night.

The rest of the story concerns the remarkable boat journey which ended at Fayal sixteen days later, after

they had steered by the sun and the stars. One man, the quartermaster, perished from the privations suffered, but the others all reached land safely, thanks to the fortitude of and example set by their leader. They had lived on a small bag of bread, a small ham, a piece of pork, two quarts of water, and a few French cordials. For the first eight or nine days the wind blew from the south, and the boat was kept on an E.N.E. course until the captain began to fear that they were getting too far north to make the Azores. On the fifteenth day all in the boat had become reduced to such a state of weakness that had not succour been speedily forthcoming they would inevitably have perished. All save the captain had succumbed to the temptation to drink sea-water, but he resisted the desire with the same fortitude which he had shown throughout the journey. The next day, when their last breakfast was served, one of the men declared very positively that he could see land through the fog-banks which then lay over the sea. Though in some doubt, the captain steered the boat in that direction, until, sure enough, in two hours' time every one could see the land. It must have been twenty leagues away when first spied by the hawk-eyed seaman, for they did not reach it until ten o'clock that night, although driving through the seas at six miles an hour. Had it not been for the temporary rift in the fog they would have missed the island, as the wind was not fair for it. The land proved to be Fayal, and they landed at midnight, after cruising off shore in the dark for some hours in search of a safe beach on which to run up the boat. The men were received by the British Consul, who attended to their wants, and in the course of time sent them back to England. The *Centaur*, with the rest of the crew, is presumed to have foundered, as it was never heard of again.

As soon as land is sighted after a stormy voyage the nervous sea-traveller experiences a pleasant feeling of security; yet to a sailor the farther he is from land in rough weather the better. "Keep a good offing" might well be his motto. Even to a steamer this applies, but to a sailing-ship the rule is of the utmost importance. For if a sailing-ship finds herself being gradually blown on to a lee-shore, without room to 'claw' or 'beat' off it, then there is nothing for the crew to do but to wait for the end. As an illustration of the "perils of the land" there is the tragic story of the *Halswell*.

She was an East Indiaman of 758 tons, commanded by Captain Richard Pierce. With a good crew and a full list of passengers, mostly soldiers, but including a few women, the ship left England at the end of December 1785, passing through the Downs on New Year's Day, bound for India. She was a handsome ship, one of the finest in the service, and all the passengers looked forward to a safe and happy journey. On Monday, January 3, a fine breeze sprang up—the sea having been calm until then—and when opposite Dunnose the *Halswell* ran in shore to try to land the pilot. At nine o'clock in the evening, as the weather had become worse, the anchor was let go in eighteen fathoms. Snow was falling, and the topsails were taken in, but it was found impossible to furl the frozen courses. At four o'clock the next morning, a violent gale having come up, the captain ordered the cables to be cut and the ship run out to sea. After this was done the *Halswell* spoke a brig, and with great difficulty managed to put the pilot aboard her, as they had not been able to land him at Dunnose. At ten o'clock the same morning, when the gale had further increased in violence, the hawse-plugs were washed out of the hawse-pipe holes, and a great quantity of water entered the forepart of the ship, which had already sprung a leak. When the well was

sounded five feet of water was found over the keelson, which meant that the ship was leaking like the proverbial sieve. All that day the *Halswell* was buffeted about in the Channel, and at two o'clock on Wednesday morning the mizen-mast was cut away to ease the ship. There were now seven feet of water in the hold, with the leak steadily gaining. Every effort was made to try to get the ship into the wind, but without success. The main-mast was next sent overboard, and with it four seamen were lost. At dawn on January 5, though the wind had moderated somewhat, the *Halswell* was labouring and straining herself so violently that the fore topmast came crashing down. Berry Head could now be seen about five leagues away, and with a jury mainmast and mizen they tried to get into Portsmouth; but the wind drove them down the Channel until, by noon on the following day, Portland was abeam about three leagues off. In a strong southerly gale the ship was now driven eastward toward the jutting part of Dorsetshire called St Alban's Head. As darkness came on the lights of Portland could be seen twinkling in the west, and getting farther and farther away as the forbidding headland drew nearer and nearer. At eleven o'clock St Alban's Head was a mile and a half to leeward, but the ship was being rapidly driven on to a lee-shore. Thus there was no hope that she could clear Durlston Head and get into the shelter of the Isle of

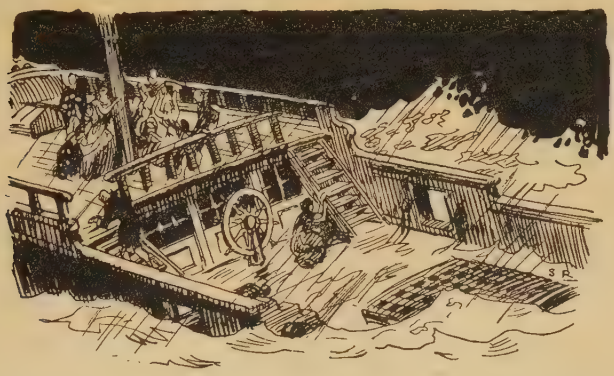
JURY RIG

Purbeck, where she could run into Studland Bay. As she was now too close to the black cliffs to be able to 'claw off' with the sails, all canvas was taken in and the small bower anchor let go. For an hour this anchor held the unhappy ship from the waiting rocks, and as it broke out

and the *Halswell* began to drive the sheet anchor was let go. This held for two hours more, when it also broke out from the bottom, and the ship entered upon her last phase. At two o'clock in the morning of Friday, January 7, she struck the rocks. She had gone ashore near Seacombe, which is between St Alban's Head and Peveril Point. The sea ran too high for boats to be launched, for they would have been instantly smashed against the sheer cliffs of rock that were almost within oar's length of the

ship. The chief officer explained the situation to the passengers and advised them to try to escape singly to shore, for it was a case of each man for himself.

The *Halswell* struck at a point opposite an immense cave in the rock with nearly perpendicular walls. The cavern was perhaps ten or twelve yards deep and of the length of a large ship. An ensign staff was laid across from the ship's side to the cliff; but as this broke in two



a spar was then got across to the rocks. By it Mr Merriton, the first mate, attempted to cross, but dropped off and was washed into the cavern, where he grasped a ledge of rock and drew himself up out of reach of the seas. By this time the ship had broken in two amidships, though the stern part, where most of the crew had gathered with the passengers, was still held fast on the rocks. Fifty people crowded into the round house, including the captain, who had gone there to hearten his two daughters, who were on board. Mr Brimer, the second mate, a male passenger, and a midshipman had just left the round house when a sea broke over it, sweeping it away; and as the three men gained the temporary safety of the poop they heard the voices of the imprisoned people raised in terror as they went overboard with the wreckage. And

now the second mate found himself washed overboard and clinging to a hen-coop, on to which two other men also clung for their lives, while the seas dashed them against the rocks, where, sorely bruised, they were able to find a precarious foothold. Groping with frozen fingers in the dark, they pulled themselves slowly out of reach of the sea, which was then at low tide, but would overwhelm them later if they could not find a ledge still higher up. In the darkness other men were desperately clinging to the wet rock, and when day broke it was seen that the wreck had entirely disappeared, not a single spar or plank remaining where the *Halswell* had been a few hours before. As the grey light penetrated the cavern it showed twenty-three men perched on a ledge above high-water mark. The number had been greater, but many, becoming benumbed with cold, had fallen back into the sea and perished. With the coming of daylight the shipwrecked men looked for a way to safety, and found that their only hope lay in climbing up the almost perpendicular rocks to the top of the cliff two hundred feet above. Many attempted to scale the wet rocks and failed; but eventually two men succeeded — the cook and a quartermaster. These two hastened to the nearest house, which happened to be the home of the agent of the Purbeck quarries. The three lost no time in collecting ropes and other gear to rescue the men at the foot of the cliff. Hurrying to the cliff's edge, they got a rope over just in time to save Mr Merriton, who had climbed to within a few feet of the top when he became exhausted. A great number of men were clinging to ledges below and outside the cavern. These were hauled up by ropes after considerable difficulty; but there remained those in the cavern who were out of reach of the rope and too exhausted to climb unaided. These men were rescued eventually by the help of the wind. The same gale that nearly destroyed

them now lent its aid to save them by blowing the suspended ropes under the cliff, and so within their reach. In a bowline they were hauled up, one at a time, to the cliff-top and safety. Out of the two hundred and forty who had sailed seventy-four men were saved, or saved themselves. Approximately seventy others gained the rocks, but were washed away or dropped off during the night, and so were drowned. The poor women never had a chance of surviving. Under such frightful conditions only the strongest could survive, and it is quite remarkable that more than seventy men succeeded in living through the night.

Another 'classical' shipwreck that very graphically shows the "perils of the land," in more than one sense, is the wreck of the *Grosvenor*. Like the *Halswell*, she was an East Indiaman, though a slightly larger ship. She left Trincomalee for England on June 13, 1782, with twenty passengers and a large crew. Besides passengers she carried an unusually valuable cargo, even for an East Indiaman. In her strong rooms there were stowed three-quarters of a million pounds of specie, half a million pounds in gold ingots, besides a great quantity of silver bars and half a million pounds' worth of such precious stones as rubies, sapphires, emeralds, and diamonds. It was also said that the *Grosvenor* had on board the golden peacocks from the famous throne at Delhi. These peacocks were encrusted with precious stones to the value of six millions sterling, so that the captain had every reason to see to the safety of his ship, apart from the human freight she carried. A course bearing south-west was made across the Indian Ocean toward the Cape of Good Hope—the usual course, in fact, for all Indiamen returning to England.

On August 3 the sky was overcast, and a strong gale blew up, which continued with great violence throughout

the following day. At this time Captain Coxon estimated that the ship was at least one hundred leagues from the nearest land, the coast of Africa, so it is not surprising that the officer of the watch laughed to scorn the fantastic tale which the look-out brought to him of breakers to be seen to leeward. The sailor then rushed below to inform the captain, who, being impressed with the almost incredible

THE "GROSVENOR"

story, came on deck, to discover the alarm to be unhappily true. The order was given instantly to wear ship, but it came much too late to save the vessel, for, before she had quite veered round, her keel grated on the fangs of rock now jutting out of the breakers all round them. Her stern was lifted high up on the rocks, and for the time being there was no immediate peril to anyone. The masts were cut away; but the only result of thus lightening the ship was to cause the big rollers to drive her more firmly on to the rocks. Meanwhile, three men endeavoured to swim ashore with a rope, and two of them succeeded, the other being drowned. By means of the line a hawser

was dragged ashore and made fast to a convenient point of rock, thus establishing a line of communication between ship and shore. A raft was next launched by those on the *Grosvenor*; but it could not live in such a sea, and was no sooner put over the vessel's side than it was smashed to pieces. The yawl and the jolly-boat having been reduced to little wrecks, the only remaining means of reaching the shore was by the hempen cable, now sagging into the white foam of the breakers. While many of the passengers and crew were attempting this hand-over-hand progress, many getting washed away in the attempt, the ship broke in two just forward of the main-mast. Those on board crowded on to the poop, which remained the highest part of the wreck out of water, and shortly afterward this part of the unhappy *Grosvenor* floated into shoal-water, where every one (except the cook's mate, who was said to be drunk) got safely ashore. The ship had struck just before dawn on August 4, and most of the dramatic scenes, the breaking-up of the ship, the rescue of some of the company, and the loss of others, took place during the daylight; but now the forlorn castaways had at last got ashore they had escaped from one peril only to be confronted with another. Night was approaching, and the natives who had gathered on the beach during the day had behaved in a manner that boded no good for the future. They were not actively hostile, but they acted after the manner of people who, knowing the weakness of their victims, are content to bide their time.

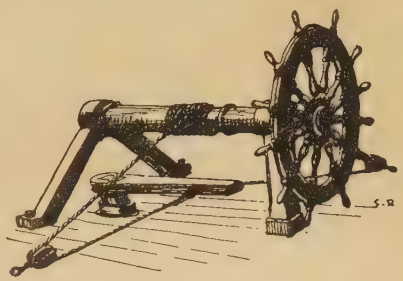
At dusk they retired from the beach, and the miserable people of the *Grosvenor*, including many women and children, spent the night undisturbed round the camp-fires the blacks had left there. Some pigs and poultry that had been brought ashore, and a barrel of flour and a cask of beef that had been washed up, gave them the means of getting the food they needed. They had landed on the coast of

what is now known as Pondoland, and the natives were Kaffirs, or, as the old writers termed them, Caffres. These natives were a most forbidding-looking tribe, and the mere appearance of them alarmed the *Grosvenor's* women passengers; but at first the Kaffirs did nothing worse than take whatever possessions of the castaways they felt a

craving for and follow them when they started on the long march southward to the nearest Dutch settlement at Cape Town.

The survivors give us a graphic story of that terrible overland journey of the *Grosvenor's* people. They struck out, men, women, and children, on August 7 for the trek, through unknown country and dangers, to the blessed haven of refuge somewhere in the distant south. Before many days had passed their only pieces of flint and steel were taken from them. Henceforth a lighted torch had to be carried along, for, having no other means of starting a fire, they dared not let it become extinguished. The difficulties and perils of the journey are adequately expressed

in the simple statement that, out of the one hundred and thirty-four people that safely got ashore from the wrecked *Grosvenor*, only eighteen of them ever reached civilization, and these only after a trek of a hundred and seventeen days. The first to reach help were six of the *Grosvenor's* men, who came upon a Dutch and a Portuguese settler on the boundary of the Dutch territory, four hundred miles from the Cape. These six survivors were but a handful out of a large company that had divided themselves from the main party at the beginning of the journey, and they lost no time in telling their saviours of the other party that had been left behind.



A large expedition was sent in search of the rest of the *Grosvenor's* people. It comprised a hundred Europeans and three hundred Hottentot allies. At different spots on the route northward an odd survivor or two was picked up, until twelve more were found. These included seven Lascars, two negresses, and one white woman. The expedition had to abandon the search before they had gone the whole distance, because the overwhelming numbers of hostile Kaffirs made further progress impossible. Most of the people from the wreck undoubtedly died on the march, but it is quite probable that some of the white women were taken captive by the natives.

In modern times there have been several attempts to salve the treasure lying among the ribs of the sunken *Grosvenor*, but so far little has been located beyond the site of the wreck itself.

CHAPTER II

The "Wager": The "Strathmore"

In the year 1740 there sailed from Spithead a squadron of six men-of-war bound for a cruise in the Pacific to harass Spanish trade. The squadron was under the command of Commodore George Anson, who, before he was to see England again, was to make himself renowned as a great sailor. Besides his own ship, the *Centurion*, of sixty guns, there were the fifty-gun ships *Gloucester* and *Severn*, and three smaller vessels of from eight to forty guns, named respectively the *Tryal*, *Wager*, and *Pearl*. If we know our naval history we can visualize the types of vessels Anson's ships were. Bluff-bowed, cranky, and difficult to sail to windward, they were the sort of craft to bring out the skill and resources of a good seaman. The ships were old and in poor condition, leaking and worm-eaten, with provisions unfit for human consumption. As, in addition, they were manned by impressed and unwilling crews it was inevitable that trouble should ensue before the squadron had gone far. Unable to obtain sufficient men by normal methods, the Admiralty sent Anson five hundred pensioned men from Chelsea Hospital, half of

whom deserted at Portsmouth, only two hundred and fifty-nine reporting to the Commodore. Out of this number the majority were old men quite incapable of doing sailors' work. They were so unfitted for the voyage that in less than a year all but half a dozen had died of hardship, and the few who were left never lived to see England. Such was the administration of the Navy in the good old days. But the tragic scandal of giving Anson men so unfit for duty only serves to emphasize the difficulties of his task and leave us in no doubt as to his position both as a man and a sailor.

Bad luck dogged the squadron from the start. During the thirty-seven-day passage to Madeira against contrary winds fourteen men had died, and over a hundred were sick. Continuing southward, Santa Catharina Island, off the coast of Brazil, was reached in December, where scores of sick men were landed, suffering from the dreadful scurvy that ravaged the squadron. They stayed at the island a month, and while there the *Centurion* alone buried twenty-eight men, making one hundred and sixty deaths in the squadron since leaving England. In January 1741 they pushed southward again to the next rendezvous, Port St Julian, near Cape Horn, where a stay of a few days was made to refit some of the ships which had lost spars in the bad weather they had come through. Coming up to the Horn, they met violent gales and huge seas, which forced them at times to drive under bare poles. Labouring in gales that blew the sails to ribbons as soon as they were bent, the ships were strained so badly that the scurvy-plagued crews were forced to spend much of their time at the pumps to keep the whole squadron from foundering. Many attempts were made to round the Horn before they succeeded, the fierce gales driving them back, while week after week they tried to beat to westward. Two of the ships, the *Pearl* and the *Severn*, became so badly battered,

and their crews so reduced through scurvy, that they were obliged to return to England and leave the remainder of the squadron to continue its efforts to round the Horn.

Still the *Centurion* and her consorts struggled against the gales, each separately fighting her own way westward when the wind and sea permitted. The *Centurion's* company was decimated by the dread scourge of scurvy, so that by the month of May two hundred of her crew had perished and there was hardly a sound man left on board. The little twenty-eight-gun ship *Wager*, staggering along in the rear, had so far kept company with the squadron, but the weather off the Horn had proved too much for her, and, besides losing sight of the *Centurion*, she was almost wrecked on the black rocks of Staten Island. Beating about in these tempestuous seas for weeks, she finally weathered the Cape and set a course to the northward, where it was hoped to come up with the flagship at the prearranged rendezvous. But the *Wager* was not yet out of the stormy area, for just when it seemed that her worst troubles were behind her the constant rolling brought down the mizen-mast, which went overboard with its yards and gear. Misfortune had set its mark on the ship. Further heavy gales smashed the boats and so badly strained the hull that she began to leak dangerously. Meanwhile, a jury mizen was rigged from the lower studding-sail boom and the broken bulwarks patched up

with spare timbering. The ship was now labouring so badly that Captain Cheap decided to have the heavy bower anchor cut away to ease the load forward. At great risk some of the crew made a dash forward from the poop, only to have to spring for the main rigging as an enormous sea came aboard. Waiting their chance, when the water had gone they gained the bows of the ship, and with the greatest difficulty succeeded in cutting the cable that held the bower anchor fast.

The position was hourly growing worse, and, to the east, through the flying scud and spray the crew occasionally glimpsed the snow-capped peaks of a range of mighty mountains, which they thought to be the Cordilleras. Between those peaks and the ship lay the rocky coast, and from the direction of the wind every man on board the *Wager* knew she was being driven on to a lee-shore. She was in the worst position a ship can get into. The wind and the sea were inexorably forcing the unfortunate vessel toward the jagged black rocks that stood among the white breakers somewhere to leeward. All the arts of seamanship were used to avoid the calamity. In the language of the sea they did what they could to 'claw off.'

Above the roar of the gale, the whine of the wind in the rigging, and the crashing of tons of water aboard, the voices of the officers would be faintly heard shouting orders to the crew. Aloft, men were held flattened to the rigging by the hurricane, fighting with frozen fingers to make gaskets fast or subdue a sail broken loose. The ship continued to drive, her decks submerged in the breaking seas, her masts bent like bows to the fury of the storm, and her lower yard-arms dipping at each roll.

There was no longer any hope. The crashing thunder of the Pacific combers breaking on the gaunt and rocky coast could now be plainly heard above the noise of the storm. Seeing that the ship was doomed, Captain Cheap

searched for a passage through the outer reef, upon which the seas broke with a constant booming like the sound of distant thunder. If a passage could be found the ship might be steered through it, and so driven ashore where the crew would have a chance of saving their lives. But the manœuvre was not successful, and at four o'clock in the morning the *Wager* struck. She was immediately laid on her beam ends, and the sea began to break clear over her, washing everything movable off the decks, and driving the crew to the refuge of the rigging or the sacred precincts of the poop. Every one who was not too ill with scurvy to move was transferred to the temporary safety of the quarter-deck.

When the day broke a scene of grey desolation met the eyes of the despairing men. The ship lay helpless, the sport of the crashing seas, her rigging hanging loose and her spars snapped off like rotten wood.

Just when there seemed no hope of life a miracle occurred. The stricken ship lifted on the seas, and was carried forward through the breakers directly into the cleft of two vast rocks, where she was wedged fast, hopelessly strained and wrecked, but now safe from immediate destruction. Finding themselves delivered from what had seemed certain death, the wearied men took heart again, and worked to save the ship from further disaster. They applied themselves with axes to the wooden masts and hempen rigging, until all this top hamper came down and eased the stress on the weakened hull.

The *Wager* was still a short distance from the land, and when the gale had calmed somewhat it was decided to try to get a boat ashore. But now a difficulty presented itself. In those days davits were not used, the boats being lowered from the yard-arms. As the masts had gone, the usual method of launching the boats was not possible, and it was only after enormous labour and some danger

that they were got into the water. While the more reliable members of the crew were working to get the boats over, many of the others had abandoned themselves to an orgy of drinking and looting, on the excuse that as they had to die they might as well die happy. They had broached the rum casks and knocked the heads off the bottles in the wine-store, with the result that many of the men were riotously drunk. Unfortunately, Captain Cheap seemed not to have been greatly respected among his crew, for now in the hour of greatest need of discipline there was

almost none. So, while half his crew were drinking and carousing, the rest, with their captain (who had a disabled shoulder), went ashore in the boats.

The country where the *Wager* had struck was a small, barren island off the south-west point of South America, as desolate and forlorn a spot to be marooned upon as can be imagined. Furthermore, they were in enemy country, for the Spanish would undoubtedly consider it poetic justice to have the English sailors delivered into their hands. Here were one hundred and forty men thrown ashore in one of the bleakest regions on earth. The country was hilly and almost treeless. Where the shipwrecked men landed there was no beach, steps having to be cut in the face of the rocks to get inland. This terrible country was always cold, and rain fell there almost constantly.

When the rebellious ones had become sober they came

ashore and joined the others, though there was unceasing friction between the different groups of men. At first they lived chiefly on the food-stores that were washed ashore from the wreck, but as these became less they were augmented and then entirely replaced by seagulls and wild celery, the only edible vegetable that could be discovered. The seagulls were found in great numbers, and, never having learned to fear man, they were easily caught. After the castaways had been on the island for some time a

few wandering Indians of a very low type appeared, but they were too poor to bring food, and their presence was of no help to the white men.

The weakness of discipline among the men now began to show itself again. There were mutinous murmurs in a rising *crescendo*, until seventy of the malcontents repaired the long boat and put out to sea, standing for the mainland. Thus twenty men, including Captain Cheap, were left behind, the rest having perished of their privations. The boat was sailed through the Straits of Magellan, and eventually reached the River Plate with thirty out of the original seventy still alive. The survivors reached England by way of Lisbon, after an absence of two and a half years.

In the meantime the twenty men left on the island had suffered severely from hunger, as the mutineers had carried

away most of the food and seagulls had become scarce. As there were two of the *Wager's* smaller boats still lying on the beach the now desperate men decided to set out in these little cockleshells for the nearest Spanish settlement and to try if possible to capture by surprise a Spanish vessel and sail away in her. But the first attempt to get away failed, the boats being so overloaded that one of them filled with water, and a fresh start had to be made after leaving four men behind. On the second attempt such heavy seas were met after leaving the island that again they had to return. The party was now reduced to thirteen men, Captain Cheap being among the survivors. Just when they were becoming resigned to their fate a local Indian chief appeared from another island, and they struck a bargain with him to pilot them to the mainland, in return for which he would receive the boat.

The chief kept to his bargain, and in due time brought the starved remnants of the *Wager's* crew to the mainland, where, arriving nearly dead, they were taken prisoners by the Spanish. There were only four men alive when the party reached the Spanish settlement. These were the captain, two sailors, and an officer, the Honourable John Byron, ancestor of the poet, who wrote the account of the voyage from which this epitome is made. They were thrown into a common gaol at first, but subsequently were moved to better quarters, and detained for two years as prisoners of war. At the end of that period they were sent to Europe in a French ship, and set free by an order from the Spanish Court. On reaching Dover, in 1746, after an absence from England of six years, Byron was penniless, so that he was forced to gallop his horse through all the turnpikes between Dover and London, whither he was bound.

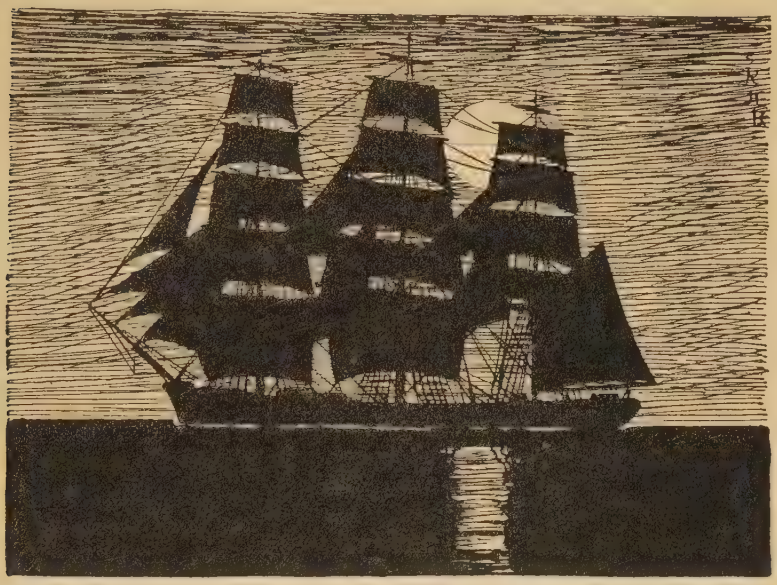
The experience of being shipwrecked on a barren shore brings out the worst and best qualities of the human

character in a manner that no other experience can do. The tales of shipwrecked crews can be of enormous interest to students of human nature, for the situation confronting the castaways immediately calls forth traits and capacities that in civilized life are not absolutely essential to happiness.

As in Sir James Barrie's *The Admirable Crichton*, the butler may be master on a desert island and the erstwhile master reduced to the position of an inferior. For when life is shorn of its frills we discover (perhaps to our dismay) that the only indispensable human qualities are courage and a resourceful mind. So it happens that when a mixed company of people have the ill-fortune to be stranded on some remote spot, without the conventional necessities of life, the carpenter is likely to be a more useful member of the little community than, say, the accountant or the actor. As the days pass by each member of the little group of castaways gradually finds his or her level. The artificial standards of human worth are swept away before stern necessity, which is the ultimate judge, and the spoilt creature of the drawing-room is seen to be what actually he always was, a rather small and pathetic object in the scheme of things. Alexander Selkirk, the prototype of Robinson Crusoe, could never have survived his experience had he been a man without courage and imagination. These two qualities, going hand in hand, can accomplish almost anything.

South-east of the Cape of Good Hope, in the less frequented waters of the Southern Indian Ocean, right away from the track of ships, lies the little group of five small islands known as the Crozets, gloomy, precipitous, volcanic rocks rising above the surface of the ocean. Their proximity to the cold latitudes of the Antarctic Circle may be judged by the fact that the Crozets are the home of vast numbers of penguins. A grim place on which to be ship-

wrecked—the antithesis of Crusoe's sylvan isle, with its wild goats, parrots, soft foliage, and balmy airs! Small opportunity on the Crozets to emulate Crusoe's feat, for here is a spot where it would take more than a Crichton to survive for twenty years. Yet it was on these cheerless rocks that more than four score people had to live for



many months after their ship, the *Strathmore*, ran ashore there in 1875.

The *Strathmore*, an iron clipper of 1500 tons, left London on April 17 of that year with a crew of thirty-eight men and boys and fifty-one passengers. She carried in her hold a cargo of railway iron, and stopped below Gravesend to take on twenty tons of gunpowder, finally setting sail two days later. The commander, Captain Macdonald, and his first mate, Mr Ramsay, were both careful and efficient navigators, but the crew were a rough lot of men, and during the ship's passage south they were

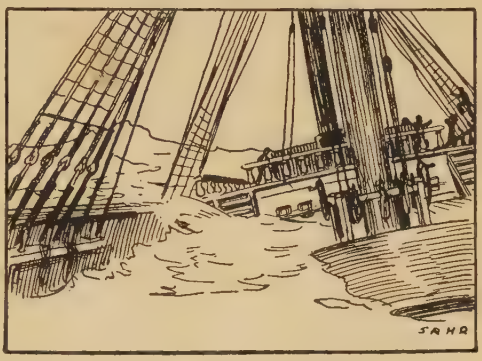
undisciplined, and consequently were frequently in trouble with their officers. They broke into the cargo, stealing two cases of spirits, and presented the unwonted sight of appearing on deck half-drunk—a heinous crime at sea. No serious trouble came of this, however, and by degrees all the men settled down to the routine of the ship. By the end of June the Cape had been rounded in a wide circle which brought the ship, according to dead-reckoning, within about eighty-seven miles of the Crozets. The sea was shrouded in fog, but in such lonely latitudes there was no great cause for anxiety, the *Strathmore* apparently having plenty of sea-room.

On the evening of June 30 the passengers went to bed all unsuspecting that it was the last night they would spend at sea. The *Strathmore* groped her way through the fog, rolling in the seaway, a silent ship except for the creaking of the blocks, the muffled voices of the watch, and the eerie clanging of the bell every half-hour. Eight bells struck, and the reverberations were at once muffled in the heavy air. From the sea came no unusual sounds to warn the look-out of danger. The watch, sleepy and cold, stood by on the main deck, shadowy figures in the gloom.

Two bells struck, three bells, and so on until seven bells [1] had gone, when the silence was rent by an ominous grating sound, quickly followed by a crashing, tearing noise that

[1] Two bells, one o'clock; three bells, half-past one; seven bells, half-past three. See Glossary.

brought the terrified passengers from their warm blankets to rush on deck barefooted and half clad. The gallant ship trembled as the fangs of rock tore at her vitals and held her fast.[1] At once all was confusion on the deck. A rapid examination below had shown the *Strathmore* to be settling by the stern. One boat was launched, but while they were getting another into the water a big roller came over the sinking ship, washing overboard several men, who were drowned. As the *Strathmore* sank lower in the water the port lifeboat, with eighteen men and Mrs Wordsworth (the only woman saved) and her little son, succeeded in getting to the rocky shore one hundred yards away. One of the women passengers had an opportunity to leave the ship, but as her child was still on board she preferred to step back on the deck and perish rather than leave it. The captain and first mate were washed overboard and drowned shortly after the ship struck, the second mate now assuming command.



By climbing the rigging and taking refuge on the top of the deck-house those people still on board retreated from the rising water, and on their chilly perches spent the rest of the night. At daybreak, as soon as there was light enough to see, some sailors and passengers succeeded in floating the gig and the dinghy clear of the wreckage and getting to the shore. By careful handling the boats safely made several trips between the land and the wreck,

[1] The cargo of iron may have caused a deviation in the compass needle, thus giving the wrong bearings.

whose topmasts remained above the sea. Thus most of the men who were still in the rigging were taken off. Darkness intervened before the work was finished, but on the following day five remaining men were rescued from the mizen-top. The ship had sunk in comparatively shallow water, which mercifully had left her tops uncovered to form a haven of refuge for the passengers and crew until they could get ashore in the boats.

She had been wrecked on Apostle Island, one of the Crozets, a mere reef of rocks. The other islands of the group are named Possession, Swine, Penguin, and East Island. The coast where the castaways landed was without a beach, and so steep that they had to be hauled up the rocks by the aid of a rope. The only inhabitants of this bleak spot were thousands of sea-birds, mostly penguins.

On the second night ashore one of the third-class passengers died, but every one else had survived the rigours of being cold and wet without apparent harm. Mrs Wordsworth, although far from well and a semi-invalid during the whole of her stay on the island, bore the hardships with great fortitude. Besides her own little son she had to mother another child, whose own mother was drowned in the ship, and one of the first things the men did was to rig up a shelter of tarpaulin stretched over oars for her and the two children. Into this poor shelter they crawled at night, while the men found what rest they could among the rocks. This was only at first, for after a few days a shelter was built of wreckage and turf, though the primitive structure was more of a pen than a house, being only four feet high, a long, narrow tunnel with a boat-cover stretched over the top.

Meanwhile, in spite of heavy seas the gig brought off from the wreck some clothes and matches in tin boxes. With matches a fire was lighted, and a few slaughtered penguins were roasted on wooden spits, enough for every

one. These birds seemed indifferent to the presence of the invaders of their island sanctuary, and it was this indifference on the part of the feathered natives that enabled the castaways to get food when they would otherwise have starved.

The birds were a remarkable feature of the island. There were several varieties—albatrosses, petrels, gulls, divers, and penguins, of which last there were estimated to be at times as many as a million. Fifty thousand were killed for food and for their skins, and it seemed to make no difference to their numbers.

Though many albatrosses were killed, the people agreed not to take the eggs, in order to ensure a supply of these birds in case they were still on the island the following year. The albatrosses were unusually large, one caught measuring seventeen feet across the wing-tips. The penguins afforded the castaways a great deal of amusement, and at first some reluctance was shown in killing them, but stern necessity swept sentiment aside, and these harmless birds were soon slaughtered wholesale, for their skins, their meat, and their fat. Even the feathers were used for fuel. Their skins made bags, footgear, and clothing.

The patient endurance of the penguins was pathetic. They would sit on their eggs, no matter whether the snow covered them or their small tails froze to the rocks, and they would thus remain for weeks without seeming to eat at all. Their eggs were laid anywhere, without regard to shelter against the bleak winds. Such casually laid eggs need faithful birds to sit over them if they are ever to hatch.

After the *Strathmore's* people had been on the island a few days a strong gale came up, and every one on shore spent a dismal night, unable to sleep in the cold, which hunger made still less bearable. There was no food gained from the wreck except a few ship's biscuits, which had been quickly eaten. The next day little groups of

men stood by the shore retrieving pieces of wreckage cast up by the breakers and seeing that the three boats did not pound themselves to pieces in the surf. At dark the men retired to their shelter after making the boats as secure as possible, but during the night the wind veered round, and when the castaways looked to the shore in the morning the boats were seen to be adrift and floating bottom up out to sea, far beyond reach. It was a terrible calamity. There was now no means of getting to the wreck, nor of making an attempt to reach the mainland of Africa, nearly a thousand miles away.

On this tiny island, little more than a barren rock, were forty-nine people, including a woman and two children, stranded without adequate food or shelter, with the prospect of an Antarctic winter before them. With the exception of the wreckage which had come ashore there was no wood on the island, and no food beyond that supplied by the sea-birds. As the ship gradually pounded to pieces on the ledge off shore odd bits of wreckage and cargo floated to the island. In this way were retrieved many boxes, but very little containing anything of much use. There was a case of wine and another of spirits, a case of ladies' boots, a barrel of pickles, and two barrels of gunpowder. Yet, with such slight encouragement to enterprise, clothes were made where there was no cloth, and food was cooked on fires made without wood. One morning when two parasols were washed upon the rocks a resourceful mind hit upon the idea of taking out one of the steel wires and by grinding it down upon a stone fashioning it into a needle. With grass for thread, or threads drawn from a sheet, and penguin-skins for cloth,

WANDSWORTH

garments were made for those who were thinly clad, and if they were ill-fitting they were none the less warm.

For a light during the long nights a lamp was contrived from a bottle filled with albatross fat, into which was stuck a small piece of cotton for a wick. Like Eskimos, the castaways used animal fat for lighting and for fuel, but, try as they might, the cooks could not avoid getting begrimed with the greasy soot from their smoking 'stoves.'

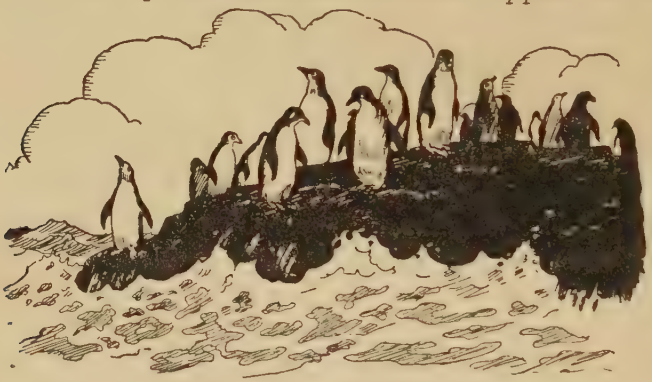
A chest of blankets and some cases of confectionery had been washed ashore, and after the sweetmeats had been emptied from the tins these were used as cooking-pots. The blankets were dried and at once allotted to those who suffered most from cold at nights. Adversity made a common bond, and though there were malcontents among the exiles most of the party worked for the common good. The need of some controlling authority was often felt, but as the weeks went by the trouble-makers became quieter, though no real discipline was ever attained. But all the men treated Mrs Wordsworth with consideration and respect, and built for her a small hut near the first one, so that she and the two children should have the privacy that was impossible in the larger shelter.

A spring of fresh water existed on the island, and as there were no buckets a pair of sea-boots was used as water-jars, while birds'-skins were turned into receptacles to store oil in. A hundred gallons of this were collected for the lamps, and thousands of penguin-skins for fuel. As it was winter [1] in these latitudes, many of the men suffered terribly from the cold, and a dozen who were rendered incapable of walking through frost-bitten feet had to be waited upon by the others.

On July 19 one of the passengers, a young man who had been ill for some time, died, and was buried in a shallow grave, the best that could be made in the frozen ground.

[1] July.

About this time the birds deserted the island, and a great depression came over the castaways when they found that their only source of food had gone, though fortunately a certain amount of meat was in hand. Near the camp was a small hill, and from this the men took it in turns to keep a look-out for passing ships. To attract attention they had erected on the highest point a flagstaff from the wreckage. For signalling, an old counterpane was kept ready to run up the staff should a sail appear in sight.



On August 31 a sail was seen 'hull down,' but the vessel was too far away to see the signals, and soon disappeared beyond the horizon. Early in September another man died, and on the 13th of the month a ship was seen, but like the former one it passed on without sighting the ragged counterpane floating on the wind. And some of the sailors vowed this misfortune was due to the date being the 13th.

Most of the company were now wearing footgear made of penguin-skins, their stout leather boots having worn out on the sharp rocks. On November 23 William Husband, an old seaman, died. In this month, to the great joy of every one, the penguins returned. They came in thousands, and large stocks of frozen meat and dried skins were stored away in preparation for another winter. The penguin eggs were used as a substitute for soap, and the

fat was melted down and stored for light and cooking. When the 'lamp' was lighted the narrow pen used as a bunk-house could be made reasonably warm by stopping up all holes with turf to shut out the searching winds, but in this confined space the lamp-wick gave off a thin smoke, which settled on everything and dimmed the already feeble light of the interior. Only those who could get close to the lamp could see to do their sewing (there were no books to read), and the rest had to sit idle in the gloom or 'go to bed.' This simple act consisted of lying down on the tussock grass spread on the ground and then huddling together for warmth under the worn blankets and pieces of tarpaulin saved from the wreck.

During November another sail appeared on the horizon, but to the great distress of the anxious watchers it disappeared without answering their frantic signals. This disappointment was so great that every one was plunged into despair for days afterward, until a few hopefuls built a tower of stones and turf on the low hill-top as a look-out station. The tower, serving the dual purpose of a shelter for the look-out and a beacon for passing ships, was erected only after great labour, as the only implements the men had for digging were pieces of hoop-iron and their own hands. Some of this iron, taken off a case of gin, was ground down into knives. On Christmas Day the orphan child died. On January 14 there was a cry of "Sail ho!"

from the look-out, and the old counterpane was loosened to the breeze, but the distant barque passed on, and the superstitious seamen laid the cause of this ill-luck to the day—Friday.

Another week of monotony went by, and another cry of "Sail ho!" came from the hill-top. As usual, those not too ill to walk rushed to the hill-side or the shore to

AMERICAN WHALING BARQUE

watch in an agony of suspense the movements of the far-off vessel. Would she see their signals, or would there be another disappointment? It was then four o'clock in the afternoon, and lest the tattered signals should not be seen by those on the ship a bonfire of some precious wood was lighted, when, to every one's inexpressible joy, the ship was seen to alter her course and bear down to the island. There was no doubt about it now. The signals had been observed, and the vessel was approaching the land as rapidly as the wind would allow. As she drew near she was seen to be a tubby, stump-masted barque, and by the number of boats hanging over the

sides from heavy wooden cranes the seamen on the shore knew that she was an American whaler.

Within a mile or two of the island she backed the main-yard [1] and lowered two boats. By now it was late in the afternoon, and as the light was failing it was impossible to take off every one that day. The boats took the lady and her little son and four of the invalids, leaving some bread and pork for the others, with the promise to take them all off the island in the morning.

After a restless, sleepless night the group of Crusoes were up early and waiting on the rocky shore for the first boat from the whaler, and when some hours later the last man stepped into the last boat he left the island without regrets. The pen that had served as their home was deserted and silent, the remains of human handiwork lay here and there, but the sound of human voices was gone, and the bleak rocks were left in the possession of the legions of birds once more.

The ship that rescued the people was the whaler *Young Phœnix*, of New Bedford, Massachusetts, and Captain Giffard's wife, who was on board, ministered to Mrs Wordsworth and her child, who quickly recovered under their kindly nurse's care. The men were all supplied with new clothes and treated with every kindness and attention. The whaler being overcrowded, twenty of the rescued men were later transferred to the ship *Sierra Morena*, bound for Kurrachee from Liverpool. Captain Giffard temporarily abandoned his whaling cruise and stood for Mauritius to land his passengers, but before reaching there the ship *Childers*, bound for Rangoon, was sighted, and to her were transferred the rest of the ship-wrecked passengers, who reached home after nearly a year's absence and an experience that falls to the lot of few men.

[1] The method of bringing a square-rigged ship to a standstill.

CHAPTER III

The "Kent" : The "Endurance" : The Thirty-two Whalers

FIRE at sea!

The East Indiaman *Kent* was burning, and as she rolled in the steep seas the flames, shooting through the gratings, licked at the rigging and masts as if to hurry the ship's destruction.

Having left England on February 19, 1825, with passengers and troops bound for India, and only ten days out, the *Kent* was lying hove to, under triple-reefed topsails, when the cry of "Fire!" went through the ship. She had left England in a fair wind, which held until they reached the Bay of Biscay, where a full gale had raised an unusually high sea. On March 1 the captain deemed it prudent to lie to, under close-reefed topsails only, to relieve both the passengers and the ship. The heavy rolling had done much damage, breaking furniture and injuring a number of people on board. Below was stowed a great quantity of round shot and powder for the army in India, and the captain, fearing that part of this dangerous cargo might have broken loose, sent one of his officers down into the hold to report on the stowage. As it was, of course, dark in the hold, without the advantage of electric light, it was necessary to

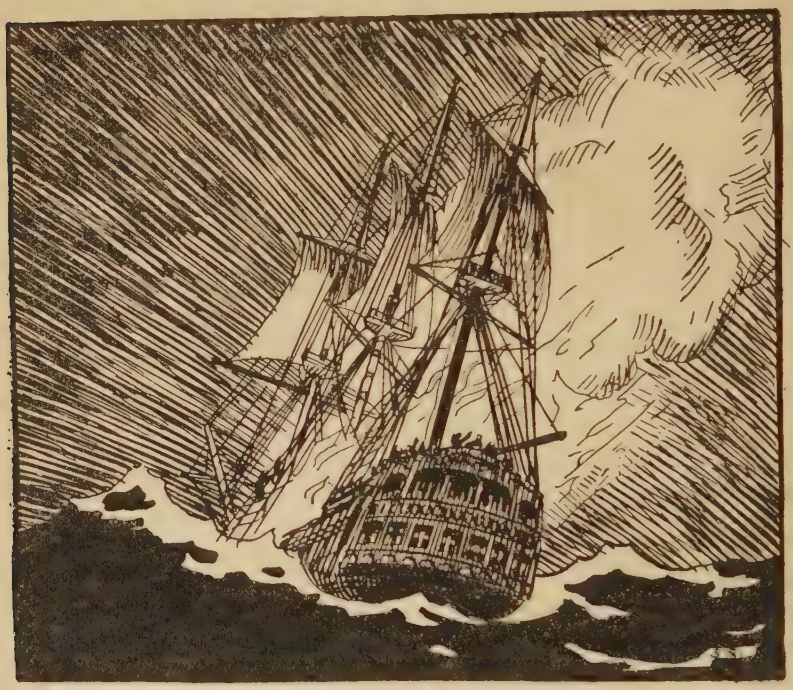
carry a lantern on the trip of inspection. Groping about with a lantern in the hold of a ship rolling each way on to her beam ends is a difficult and risky business, but when the cargo is of the sort labelled "Dangerous" the risk is increased a hundredfold. The officer and the men who made the inspection reached without mishap the hold containing a great quantity of casks of spirit, and they at once saw that one of the casks was loose and slowly leaking where the seams had opened. What followed is not difficult to picture. The ship at that moment gave a particularly violent roll, and the man holding the lantern lost his balance. Man and lantern went careering across the deck, and the spirit, becoming ignited by the naked flame, flashed ablaze instantly.

The horrified men tumbled up the ladder to give the alarm, but even while they did so the hold had become a roaring furnace. A bucket line was formed at once, but the water poured on to the flames had not the slightest effect. Wet sails were then lowered on to the flames, but these proved equally futile, the fire continuing to spread. As a last desperate measure the captain decided upon the risky experiment of flooding the lower deck by opening the lower gun-ports. This checked the progress of the flames for a while, but it unfortunately drowned a number of people still below.

Every one realized that the *Kent* was doomed, and the best they could hope for was that a ship might appear and rescue them before the flames reached the hold where the powder was stored. On the sea-swept upper deck nearly all the passengers and crew—about five hundred people—had gathered, the fire below them and the heaving seas around them. They were in a trap indeed, with but the smallest chance of escape. The sea was running too high to launch a boat safely, so the captain of the *Kent* forbore to take that chance while the flames could still be kept from

the powder-store. By keeping the bulkheads drenched in water the fire-fighters had so far been able to prevent the powder-casks from becoming too hot for safety, but it was plain that the approaching flames could not be delayed indefinitely.

When it was felt that there was no hope of rescue one



of the military officers on board, Major Sir Duncan Macgregor, wrote a message which he put into a bottle and cast overboard. This is interesting inasmuch as it is the only authentic bottle-message dispatched in such circumstances and afterward picked up. The message read, "The ship *Kent*, Indiaman, is on fire. Elizabeth, Joanna, and myself commit our spirits into the hands of our blessed Redeemer, Whose grace enables us to be quite composed

in the awful prospect of entering Eternity." And to this he attached his name and the date.

Meanwhile, a sailor posted as look-out in the foretop called out, "A sail on the lee bow." The despairing felt hope revive at the news, and everything possible was done to attract the distant sail that could now and then be seen through the flying scud. The *Kent's* guns were fired, and the reversed flag blew out stiff from the masthead. But these signals were unnecessary. The strange vessel, which turned out to be the British brig *Cambria*, bound for Vera Cruz, had seen the smoke from the burning *Kent*, and understanding that there was a ship in distress had stood down to her as speedily as the tempestuous weather would allow.

When the brig was within a few hundred yards of the *Kent* an attempt was made to launch the latter's boats, with the result that three out of four were at once smashed against the rolling Indiaman, and all the people in them were drowned. Another attempt was made with better success. There were three boats left, and, the greatest care being used in launching them, these three boats made several journeys to the *Cambria*, each time loaded with people. The trip took three-quarters of an hour, and during the trying period of waiting their turn to be transferred to safety those on board the *Kent* kept perfect discipline. The usual order of leaving the ship was observed, the women and children going first. These were lowered into the boats over the stern in a bosun's chair. The transfer of the *Kent's* people took many hours because of the distance between the two vessels and the slow progress made by the boats in the dangerous seas. It was necessary for the *Cambria* to keep a good offing, not only on account of the risk of collision, but also because the *Kent* might blow up at any moment. Another danger lay in the fact that the guns of the *Kent* were shotted, and had the

flames reached them the *Cambria* would have been subjected to a point-blank bombardment.

The suspense of waiting was telling on every one, and as the hours dragged by the work of rescue continued until the only people left on the *Kent* were men who preferred to stay on her rather than risk their lives in the boats. Darkness was approaching, and the little brig, dangerously overloaded, sailed away, leaving behind her a giant floating torch which lit up the tops of the waves for miles round.

The *Kent* was alone on the heaving waters once more. Night had fallen, and still the fire had not reached the powder-room of the doomed ship. The tarred hemp rigging had long since burnt through, and the masts had gone overboard, charred and sizzling, into the seas.

Some miles away, in the darkness, another brig was making her way slowly north through the gale. She was the *Caroline*, bound for England from Alexandria. Between one and two in the morning the watch on deck, who had noticed a distant light in the sky, were startled by the sudden appearance of a sheet of flame bursting out of the sea, to be followed immediately by the sound of a loud explosion. They arrived shortly afterward on the spot where the *Kent* had blown up, and picked up several half-conscious men from the floating wreckage. The hulk was still burning, and some men were seen to be clinging to the after-part of it. The *Caroline* launched a boat and made three trips to what remained of the *Kent*. She succeeded in saving fourteen men altogether, and soon after the smouldering hulk sank. Eighty-one people were lost, which, considering the difficulties in the way of rescue, was a remarkably small casualty list.

One more thing remains to be told. The bottle containing the message from Major Sir Duncan Macgregor, written when he was assured that he had but one hour to live, was found by a bather on the shore of the Barbadoes in the

West Indies, and in due time found its way back to the writer, who was fortunate enough to be among those who were rescued.

A shipwreck is at best a misfortune, and doubly so when attended, as it nearly always is, by a loss of life. It is therefore an agreeable change to tell the story of a wreck in which no lives were lost; for in this one, though the subsequent experiences of the crew were fraught with the greatest peril, every man was saved. It is easy enough to be heroic when the blood is hot and the spirit is fired by the cheering of a crowd. It is easy to excel oneself in valour to the music of a brass band, but adventures usually come to men without a fanfare of trumpets. In the year 1915, in the Antarctic, beyond the reach of wireless or any help, except that which they could give to one another, twenty-eight men found themselves stranded upon the ice, their ship lying on the sea-bed some hundreds of fathoms below. The vessel was the barquentine *Endurance*, and the shipwrecked men were the seamen and scientists that made up her complement, with their leader, Sir Ernest Shackleton.

The expedition, which had left England the previous year, had as its main object the crossing of the South Polar continent to add to the geographical knowledge of that little-known part of the earth. Two ships composed the expedition, the *Aurora* and the *Endurance*. Each vessel was to proceed south, the *Aurora* to the Ross Sea, where a party of men would be landed, and the *Endurance* to the Weddell Sea, putting ashore the main expedition. The plan was for picked members of the main party, under the leadership of Shackleton, to march from the Weddell Sea base, straight across the Antarctic continent, a distance of 1800 miles, to the Ross Sea, where they would be picked up by one of the two ships. The principal object of the

expedition accomplished, the various parties would pack up and return to civilization. That is the barest outline of Shackleton's plans.

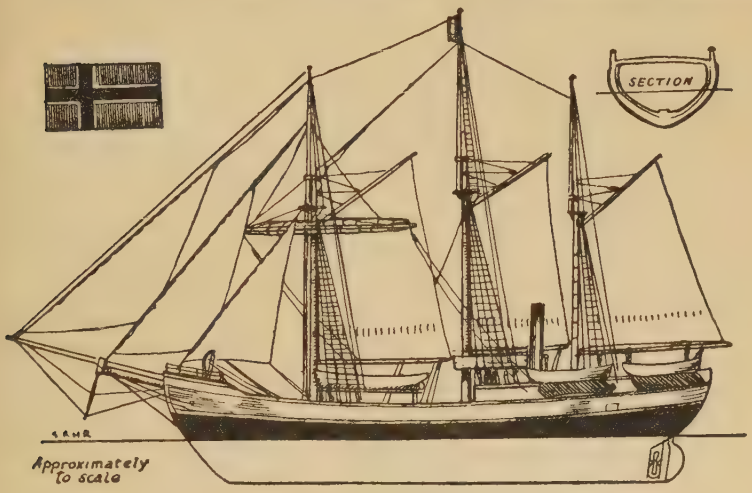
Since Scott and Amundsen in reaching the South Pole had robbed that prize of its lure, the crossing of the Antarctic ice-cap had been Shackleton's dream. After years of propaganda and the expenditure of his own time and private means, sufficient money had been raised from various interested societies and wealthy people to purchase equipment, stores, and two ships.

The *Endurance* left England on August 8, 1914, and reached the Antarctic ice in the following December. Cautiously proceeding south, she gradually worked her way through the ice-floes, with her engines at 'half,' 'slow,' 'stop,' and even 'astern,' as prudence demanded. The intention of the leader was to get the ship as close to the land as possible and unload the stores, equipment, dogs, and collapsible huts and the shore party. These last would then transport their stores and gear across the sea-ice to the land, where a base would be established.

There is nothing unusual in taking a ship through broken ice providing she is not among it long enough to be frozen in. If she could sail through the floes up to the edge of the vast strip of sea-ice that girds the land, and quickly unload the shore party and equipment, she could then return into open water and safety before the way of retreat closed behind her. It is hardly necessary to point out that the danger to a ship wintering in the ice lies in the movement of the floes, which are forced together by an enormous pressure which would crush any ship caught in its grip. The vast icefields in constant movement are continually cracking and heaving, leaving either 'lanes' of open water or pressure ridges as high as a ship's mast, where a crack has closed and the opposing masses of ice have been forced up. No ship can survive a direct 'squeeze'

from such a force. Unless a vessel has found a safe refuge in some landlocked bay where movement of the sea-ice cannot reach her she must run for it before it is too late. But the movement of the floes is extremely erratic. One day a large bay will be full of churning, grinding masses of ice; the next there will be open water, with not a floe in sight. It is a matter of winds and currents.

While we are on this subject it is interesting to recall



THE "FRAM"

Nansen's experiment of taking a vessel into the Arctic ice and intentionally allowing it to be frozen in. To do that with an ordinary vessel would have been to court almost certain disaster, but Nansen's specially built auxiliary schooner, the *Fram*, was anything but an ordinary ship. He reasoned that if a vessel was built of such a shape that when the ice closed round her hull she would be forced *out of the water* it would be perfectly safe to winter in, or rather *on*, the ice. So a ship was designed with a hull of enormous thickness, and with sides and bottom sloped in such a way that the ice could not grip it. The case was

analogous to trying to squeeze with the hand a tapering piece of wet soap. The illustration gives a fair idea of how the hull of the *Fram* was shaped—not to resist the ice, but to *retreat before it.* To make it doubly certain that she would not be crushed the framing and planking were unusually thick and strong. As much as twenty-eight inches of solid oak planking covered her bottom, and her stem—*i.e.*, prow—was built up of oak beams four feet thick, while her rudder was placed entirely below the water-line to minimize the danger of its being broken. The *Fram* was the vessel that later took Amundsen on his successful South Polar expedition.

But to return to the *Endurance.* She was built in Norway of pine and oak, and was driven by triple-expansion engines as auxiliaries to her sails. She was never, of course, intended to face a winter in the ice, and it was sheer bad luck and not bad judgment that brought about her loss. A certain amount of risk had to be taken or the expedition would have failed in its first object—the landing of the shore party. So the *Endurance* continued to steam through the loose icefields toward the land until February 22, 1915, when she could get no farther south. The Antarctic summer had passed, and the period of perpetual night was approaching. The days were getting colder, with a temperature well below zero, the ice-floes freezing into a solid mass to the horizon and beyond. Two days later the *Endurance* was frozen in, and Shackleton and his men resigned themselves to spending the winter there, hardly daring to hope that the ship would survive the experience.

From now onward the *Endurance* ceased to be a free agent moving under the power of her sails and engines. She was subject to the will of the ice, and only the future could tell what her fate would be. Though fast in the pack, she drifted for months before she was eventually crushed. Fortunately the drift was toward the north, and every mile

in that direction meant a mile nearer to the open sea and safety for the ship. Even if she was crushed later on each mile gained northward was a mile less for the men to march toward the land. From the time the *Endurance* was first beset by the ice, in the middle of January 1915, to the 21st of the following November, when she was lost, she drifted over 500 miles toward the north. When, in February, it was seen that the winter would have to be spent in the ship, the sledge dogs were all moved on to the ice, and yelped with delight at their new freedom after the cramped quarters on board. They had kennels to sleep in, and mattresses stuffed with straw for their beds, and altogether were much better off on the ice than they were in the ship.

During the months that followed, life on board the *Endurance* settled down to winter routine. The cook carried on his usual work; but the navigator, engineers, and firemen had to find other than their own work to do. There was, however, plenty to keep every one occupied. Regular observations had to be made, the dogs cared for, and the ship kept in condition. On May 1 the sun was seen for the last time, and the period of Antarctic twilight began, as the prelude to the coming darkness.

When the disappearance of the sun gives warning of the approaching night a feeling of mental oppression is but natural, and this is the period when the wise leader sees to it that his men have no time to get depressed. Perhaps no better test of men's characters could be found than a situation like this. For a company of men to be forced to

live together in the narrow quarters of a ship, daily doing the same thing and eating the same food, seeing the same faces, hearing the same voices, enduring the petty annoyances and discomforts of such a life, while not being vouchsafed a sight of the cheering sun, must indeed try their fortitude. And it is not without a little thrill of pride that we realize that, whatever are the shortcomings of our race, at times when only an indomitable spirit can bring them through our people are not found wanting.

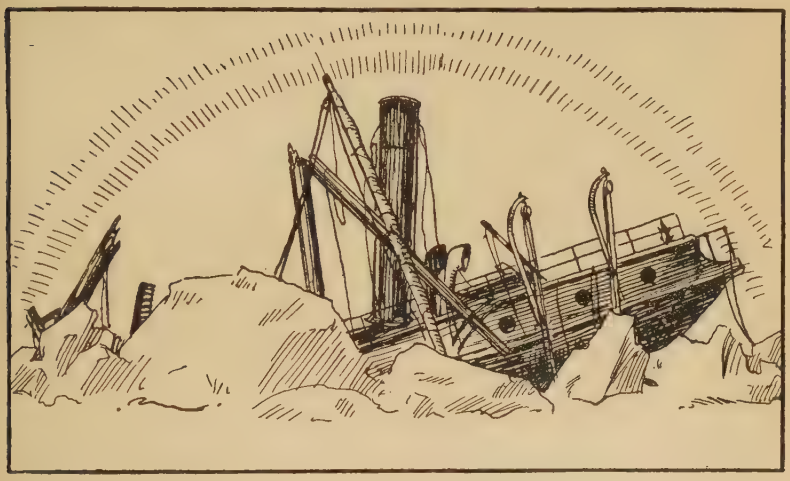
On board the *Endurance* every one kept cheery, and there was no friction to add mental to the physical discomforts of this period of waiting for the return of the sun. Meanwhile, the ship was being ground between the moving ice-pack, which had broken up, forming huge cracks.

On August 4 the sun made its first appearance above the horizon since the end of April, and, after remaining in sight for an hour, disappeared. But the polar night was over, and each day now the sun would remain above the horizon for a longer period. By October 18 the pressure of the grinding floe was becoming serious. The ship heeled over until the port boats were almost resting on the ice. The dog-kennels on deck broke loose, and pandemonium reigned among the frightened animals. The floor of the engine-room had buckled under the strain, and the ship was creaking and groaning in her agony. Toward the evening the ice opened so that the *Endurance* was allowed to assume her upright position again. There was still hope of saving her if a lead [1] would open up in the ice to the north, and, so as to be ready to get under way at a moment's notice, the boilers were filled, fires lit, and steam got up. These preparations were of no avail, however, because the ice never opened up sufficiently to permit the ship to escape.

Toward the end of October it was plain that she could not survive the pressure much longer. Fortunately the

[1] Lane of open water.

sun had returned, and the men would have the daylight in which to begin their march toward the land. The *Endurance* was now leaking badly, and energetic efforts were made to check the inflow of water, the carpenter and crew busying themselves with stopping the leaks or working at the pumps. The time had come when the perilous lodgings in the ship must be abandoned for comparative security on the ice.

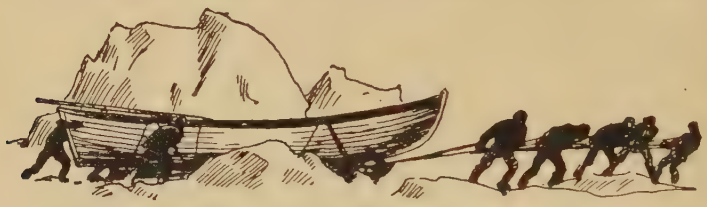


The *Endurance* was so crushed by the floes that she would have sunk at that time had she not been held up by the enemy itself, which had driven its jagged edges into the vitals of the ship. The three boats, with the stores, sledges, dogs, and equipment, were landed on the ice near the stricken ship, where a temporary camp was set up.

The twenty-eight men set up 'housekeeping' in five small tents about a hundred yards from their late home. After the comparative warmth of their quarters on the *Endurance* the ice was a cold and cheerless camping-ground; but the best was made of misfortune, and every one remained in good spirits. The camp on the ice was little more secure than the ship, for during the first night the ice-floe cracked

in a line right between the tents. The alarm was given by the watchman, and every one had to tumble out of his sleeping-bag to move everything on to the larger part of the floe, which was now in two portions.

At dawn the men came out of their tents to find the ship fast breaking up. She stood out, a gaunt skeleton of broken spars, against the cold, grey light of the sky. Her characteristic shape had gone. Her jib-boom and bowsprit had broken off, and the yards hung at all angles. A little later the fore- and main-masts, with their yards and rigging,



came crashing down; while Hurley, the photographer, stood close by, calmly turning the handle of his cinematograph, intent on getting a good picture. The next day the wreck of the *Endurance* was still held up by the ice, the blue ensign, hoisted on a broken spar, floating in the wind above her.

Now that the ship was abandoned no time must be lost in starting for the land. The greatest handicap to the fast advance of the party across the hummocky ice was the three heavy boats. But without them they could never cross the open water they must meet, so, at whatever cost, the boats must be taken along. Before beginning the arduous march northward the stores and equipment had to be reduced to the smallest possible quantity compatible with safety. Each man was allowed no more than two pounds of personal gear, which meant that most private possessions had to be left behind. But every one treasured some sentimental trifles, and, as Shackleton wrote, "Sovereigns were thrown away and photographs were kept." Dragging the boats through

WADSWORTH

the soft snow, three feet deep at times, or over the pressure ridges, turned out to be well-nigh impossible for any practical distance, so after working all day to advance one mile Shackleton decided the next morning to find a fairly level floe and camp there, waiting until a lead opened out in the vicinity where they could launch the boats and row northward. Camp was pitched on a heavy floe a mile and a half from the ship, and there the party remained for two months. During this time many visits were made to the scene of the wreck to fetch cases of food and any article of gear that would help to conserve the food-rations and equipment that would be needed on the final journey to safety. From the new camp the remains of the *Endurance* could be seen, an irregular dark shape above the ice, but on the evening of November 21 Shackleton was heard to call out, "She's going, boys!" As every man came out of the tents to watch, the ship's stern rose in the air and she sank in one quick plunge below the ice.

The *Endurance* was lost, and her company had their greatest perils still before them; but after months of drifting with the ice, or dragging the boats over its broken surface, they were at last able to get afloat and make better speed to the north. On April 15, 1916, the three boats reached Elephant Island, with every man safe, though showing the effects of the arduous journey.

How Shackleton and his five companions went for help in the 20-foot whaler, across over 800 miles of stormy seas, is told in another chapter (pp. 127–137).

It is extraordinary how the memory of great happenings fades with the passing of years. The *Titanic* is remembered, of course, but this, the greatest shipwreck in history, is already growing dim in our minds, and the next generation will think of it only as a tale that is told, just as we think of the loss of the *Royal George*. It is not surprising, then,

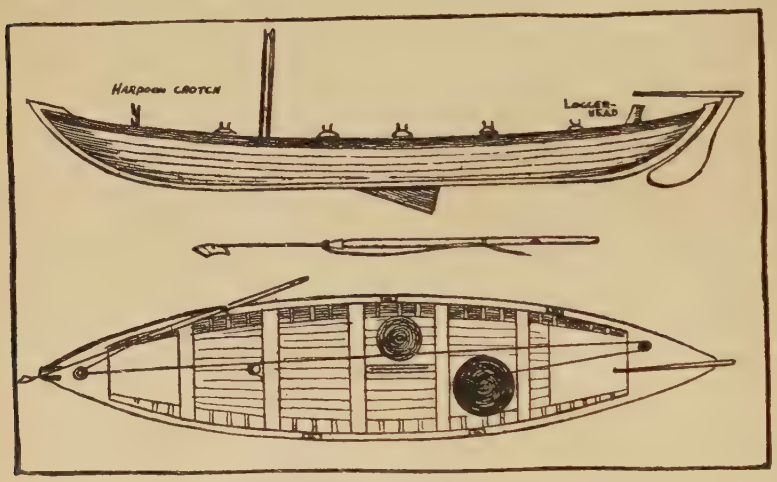
that the amazing misfortune which in 1871 caused the loss of no less than thirty-two vessels in the Arctic is already forgotten by most people. But in this disaster not a single life was lost, though this fact actually makes the story still more remarkable, and therefore less deserving of the oblivion into which it has fallen.

The story concerns the loss of the American whaling fleet that was cruising in the Arctic Ocean off the northernmost point of Alaska. Thirty out of the forty vessels making up the fleet were slowly working their way north as the ice broke up in the early summer. The aim of the whaling crews was to get to a well-known cruising-ground and capture as many whales as possible before the passing of the summer forced them to return to the south; for the autumn brought with it the terrible ice-pack, whose relentless force crushes the sides of any ship as easily as a hammer crushes a piece of china. When the whaling captains ventured to the Arctic in search of whales they well knew the danger of waiting too long before getting south after the season's work, but they were daring seamen, and on this cruise the whales were so plentiful that the captains were loath to leave so lucrative a spot until the very last minute. So they did not heed the warnings of the Eskimos, and while the crews were busy making oil, harpooning, and cutting in, and trying out the blubber, the inexorable ice-fields were drifting toward the ships. Thirty-two vessels were concentrated at one spot when the ice began to close in, and the only hope was that a north-east gale would come and move the floes back long enough to permit the fleet to make its escape. But the north-easter did not come, and the ships found the little lagoon of water in which they floated growing daily smaller and smaller. The wind came, and with it snow, but it came from the wrong direction, and thirty-two vessels found themselves in the remorseless grip of the ice. It was a scene of desolation: the snow-

covered decks and deck-houses, the yards and rigging, festooned with icicles, and the masts beginning to lean over at chaotic, drunken angles, as the wooden hulls, crushed by the ice, were no longer able to support them. By the middle of August, so early does the Arctic summer end, the ice had virtually closed in, and it was decided to abandon the ships. As it was customary in those days for captains to take their wives and children on long voyages, there were, among the thousand people composing the whaling-ships' crews, a number of women and children, who had no alternative but to abandon the rough comforts and security of their floating homes for the hardships and dangers of a possible winter in the Arctic; and had they been forced to winter on the ice probably half their number would have perished. But with the loss of the ships Fate seemed satisfied. Not a single life was lost, because by travelling along the ice and on the sea in their whale-boats the whole company was able to reach the few ships which were still in open water beyond the ice-pack. Though the safety of all these people was mainly due to the fine seamanship of the men who handled the boats, in a great measure they owed their lives to the wonderful construction of the boats themselves. Many types of open craft as small as these American whale-boats could never live through a rough

A WHALER

sea. Of all small craft propelled by oars—dories, cobles, gigs, pinnaces, jolly-boats, dinghies, longboats, lifeboats, prams, and a hundred other of these small fry of the sea —the whale-boat is the most graceful, the most cunningly conceived, and the most beautiful. Low in the waist, and rising in a subtle curve at each end, it will ride out on the long rollers of the sea like an albatross. It is perfectly

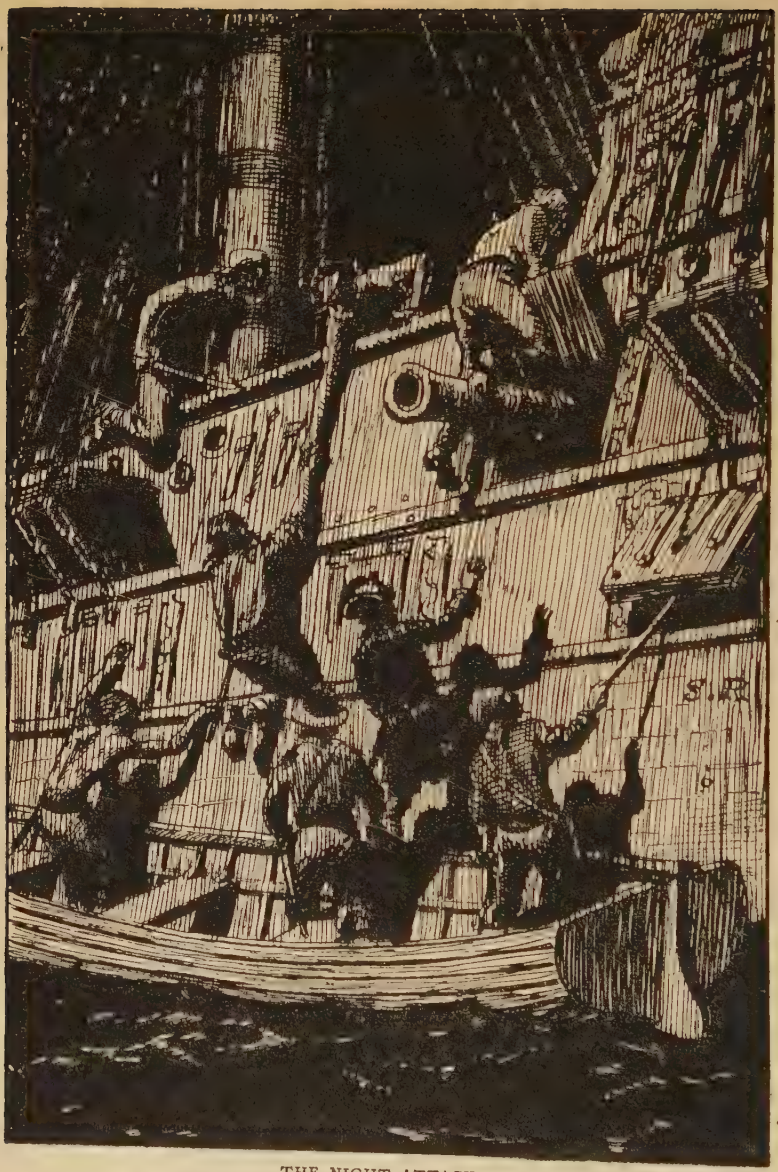


A WHALE-BOAT AND SOME GEAR

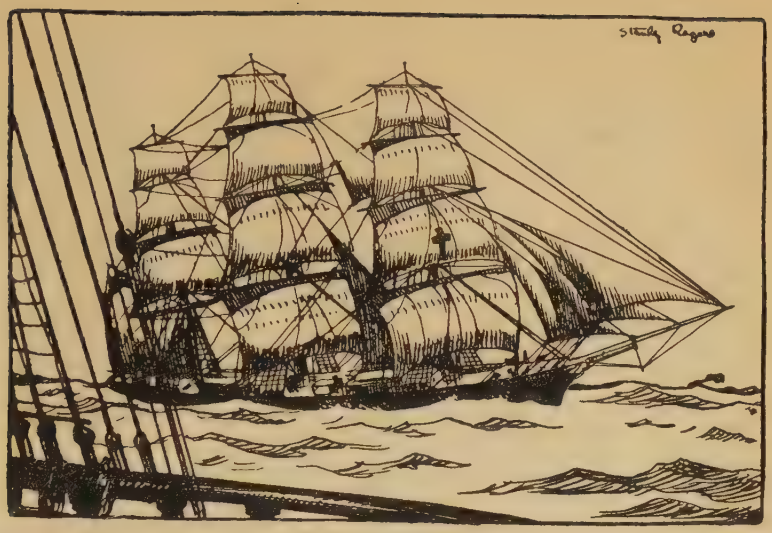
fitted to its environment, in spite of the astonishing frailty of its planking and its cockleshell-like appearance. To launch such a craft on the waves seems like suicidal folly: a river or placid lake might be a more fitting place. But the men who designed the whale-boat knew their business well. It must have speed, so they gave it lightness and grace; but it must live in rough seas, so they gave it buoyancy. It must be able to retreat from danger without losing precious moments in turning, so they gave it the sharp stern. Its perfect form evolved as the form of fishes evolved. It is the result of the survival of the fittest and the rejection of the unfit.

These frail boats, loaded to the gunwales with passengers and crews, lived up to their reputation for being seaworthy. Across miles of the roughest water, climbing over the huge waves and sliding down into the hollows, they brought a thousand people to the remaining whaling-ships and so to safety.

PART II
MUTINIES AND SEA-FIGHTS



THE NIGHT ATTACK



THE "DREADNOUGHT"

CHAPTER IV

The "Dreadnought" and the "Bounty" Mutinies

One cannot deny that the romance of life at sea in the days of the sailing-ships was often more apparent than real. A ship under sail was a beautiful sight, but her fo'c'sle crowd was frequently composed of the scum of the ports. The life of the men aboard was usually sordid in the extreme, and the notorious "Atlantic packet-rats" were men of such brutal natures that they understood no treatment but brutality. This state of affairs brought into being the class of "bucko-mates" and man-drivers that gave to many vessels the name of "hell-ships." A clipper-ship at sea with all her wings spread was a noble thing, yet life aboard her was so hard that only the fittest men could survive, and the food was so bad that men were known to save their "salt-junk" till night so that they could not see what they were eating. Some writer has called the old-time

sailormen "iron men that sailed in wooden ships," and the metaphor is a good one, for Sailor Jack lived a life of hardship and peril while carrying out orders that a landsman would have said were impossible to perform. Rounding the Horn in winter-time was an experience to try the stoutest heart. Men lived for weeks in wet clothes, sleeping (when they could) in sodden bunks, eating (when they could) cold and nasty food. They were often called in the middle of the night after they had already stood the previous watch; they were dragged out at the cry of "All hands on deck!" to tail on to braces or halyards, or to spend an hour or two aloft in the blackness and whirling snow, out on a topsail yard stowing a stubborn sail—a sail perhaps frozen stiff. While they were bursting their hearts to conquer the slatting canvas the mate's voice would, as likely as not, come bellowing up urging them with lurid epithets to hurry, or, by the great Harry, he'd come and drive them off the yard.

The real sailor was a rough, half-tamed creature, and the Liverpool Irishmen that sailed on the Western Ocean packets were a crowd of wild men that required the most rigid discipline to keep in hand at all. Some of these men were so much beyond the pale of our ideas of civilization that they carried on their bodies examples of the tattooer's art of the most hideous and revolting description. Never-

theless, however depraved they might be, they were magnificent seamen, and the smart way in which they climbed aloft and lay out on a topsail yard in a winter's gale made their captains ready to forgive them all their sins. They were half-tamed animals who had the greatest contempt for physical softness of any kind, and they scorned to wear a monkey-jacket when aloft, even in the bitterest weather, no matter if the rigging was covered with ice and the air full of driving snow. Whether the stern discipline and frequent brutality of the officers was responsible for the brutalized state of the men, or whether the bad character of these packet-rats turned the officers into the man-drivers they were, it is hard to say. The reader may decide this for himself; but the following account of a battle between the captain and his crew will show the character of both and give a fair picture of what life was sometimes like on a packet-ship making the Atlantic passage between Liverpool and New York.

In Liverpool in the fifties there was an organized gang of men known as the Bloody Forty. They were packet-rats banded together to terrorize shipmasters, and many crimes have been attributed to them, including the killing of a packet-ship captain. In the summer of 1859 thirty of this gang signed on with Captain Samuels, of the American ship *Dreadnought*, the famous "Wild Boat of the Atlantic." Some of these men had sailed with Samuels before and had a grievance to settle, and though the skipper had been warned of the organized plot against him and his ship, the grim old man accepted the dangerous crew quite readily, as he said the worst characters often made the best sailors. However that may be, the *Dreadnought* sailed with a party

of emigrants from Liverpool in July 1859, and thirty members of the Bloody Forty were on board. The ship carried a number of steerage passengers and one cabin passenger, a lady. As soon as they put to sea the old man ordered his crew to take their sheath-knives to the carpenter and have their points broken off. There was some opposition to this, and Captain Samuels called the crew aft and harangued them in quarter-deck style, while his officers searched the fo'c'sle for any deadly weapons that might be concealed there. This incident passed without any real trouble, but the next day, when abreast of Queenstown, Samuels had occasion to correct the man at the wheel for not keeping the ship on her course. There is no doubt that the skipper was an irritable old fellow—most of the captains were—but at any rate the helmsman contradicted him. This was a heinous breach of discipline which sent the old man into a rage. In a flash there was a fight, and before the man could draw his sheath-knife he lay on the deck stunned by a blow from the captain's fist. Samuels had his big Newfoundland dog, Wallace, on board, and, commanding the animal to stand guard over the prostrate figure, he rushed below to fetch the handcuffs. He called his second mate, and the two returned on deck and snapped the irons on the man's wrists. He was then locked up in a cuddy aft. His knife, afterward picked up, was found to be pointed, and Captain Samuels, fully understanding the significance of this, turned to his officers and said, "They intend to make me swim."

War was declared between the cabin and the fo'c'sle, and while Finnegan and Sweeney, the leaders of the forward gang, were plotting for mutiny the captain was taking stock of his forces. In the cabin he addressed them in his challenging manner. There were six against forty; who would stand with him to fight the men? The first mate at once refused to do any fighting, at which Samuels,

without mincing words, called him "a dirty cur." The second mate, a small man named Whitehorn, stepped forward, and in a quiet voice intimated that he would stand by the skipper. Then the third mate, a man of middle age, speaking with some uneasiness, expressed the opinion that he was "a little old." On hearing this the indomitable old captain, with the utmost contempt, ordered the first and third officers forward to the galley. Then facing the cook and carpenter he demanded whether they stood with him or not. The cook patted his stomach to indicate he was too fat, and the carpenter avowed that he had not signed on to fight. They were at once ordered below.

The emigrants were meantime in such a panic of fear that they appeared useless as a defensive force. The only cabin passenger, a lady of some social prominence in New York, was so terrified that she hid herself and could not be found for some time, until after a long search the steward discovered her under a couch.

The second move in the war was made by the captain. To try the men he shouted an order, but instead of carrying it out the men came aft and, through their spokesman, refused to return to duty until their mate was let out of irons. With that they advanced forward and started to come up the poop ladders; but they were stopped by Samuels, who had brought from below two loaded

revolvers, and now levelled them at Finnegan. This latter, with a taste for the dramatic, tore open his shirt with an outburst of oaths, and, baring his hairy chest, dared Samuels to shoot. This naturally infuriated the already excited old man, though he did not shoot, but vented his wrath in threats quite as bloodthirsty as Finnegan's. Some of the crowd were for killing "the old fool" there and then, but the less resolute of the men began to sneak back to the fo'c'sle, until all had gone but the three agitators, Finnegan, Casey, and Sweeney. With oaths they too drew back to their quarters, where with the others they barricaded themselves in. That night Samuels kept the deck with his huge dog for company, the second mate and the boy attending to the sails.

By noon on the day following, as the breeze was freshening and the crew had not put in an appearance, Samuels called out an order to take in sail, but beyond some ribald reply from the fo'c'sle the command was ignored. After dark the wind had risen to a gale, and during the early part of the night the skipper had an anxious time, but toward morning the wind began to die down, until by breakfast-time it had become but a gentle breeze. So the second night passed.

In the morning the skipper went forward and ordered the crew out. They called back through the bulkhead that they would return to duty if they could first have some food, but the hard old man refused, saying they should have something to eat after they had worked for it. At this such a howl of angry shouts went up that even the redoubtable Samuels deemed it prudent to retire. A deputation of the passengers now approached him, asking that the crew should be fed. This Samuels took as an impertinence, and absolutely refused to listen to the suggestion. Furthermore, when one of the passengers announced that they would feed the crew if the captain

would not, the old man flew into a rage and threatened to put the meddler in irons. The latter defied him to do so, whereupon Samuels sent the second mate for the handcuffs, and after a short struggle the man was made a prisoner.

During the day the wind had moderated, and before dark Samuels offered to pardon all the mutineers, except the three leaders, if the men would throw their knives overboard, but the offer was refused with angry defiance. The men had now been over two days without any food, and the skipper, feeling the urgency of a more definite action, went below to the steerage quarters, where he spoke to the German emigrants in their own language, and after a little persuasion succeeded in enlisting seventeen powerful men to his cause. He armed them with heavy iron bars and told them to remain below and not to come on deck unless called for, but if they heard the call to come quickly.

Another night came over the ship, and the captain with his dog paced the deck as usual, on the alert for a surprise attack from the men. After some time the dog started growling, and at the same moment Samuels discerned two dim forms creeping aft in the shadow. The second mate, who was on deck, inquired if he should bring the Germans, but the fierce old skipper said no. He would deal with these men himself. So he waited, tightly gripping the butt of his revolver, until the mutineers had approached closer, and when near enough Samuels called out for them to halt and announce who they were or he would shoot. From the two figures came the meek reply that they had come to surrender, upon which the captain ordered them to throw their knives overboard. After they had obeyed his command the second mate searched them but found no more weapons. They were then questioned, and they freely confessed the plans of the men forward. Some of the crew were for surrender, but Sweeney had cowed them into holding out. The mutineers planned to rush the galley

at eight bells to get the food for which they were by now craving. The two who had surrendered had contrived to escape from their mates in the darkness.

As it was certain that a fight could not be delayed much longer, Captain Samuels prepared for it. The poop was barricaded, and the Germans were sent for and stationed with their iron bars in readiness by the deckhouse. All being ready, shortly after seven bells in the middle watch,[1] the skipper with his dog and the second mate began to walk along the deck forward to reconnoitre. When they got as far as the midship house Casey and Sweeney, who had been hiding there, sprang out at the officers with drawn knives. Taken at a disadvantage, the skipper ran back, but only far enough to give him room to turn round and level his revolver at the two men. Whitehorn had rushed aft to warn the Germans. The dog attacked Sweeney, but with horrible curses the latter made for the captain, at the same time shouting for his men to come aft. In a few moments the Bloody Forty, the two officers, and the seventeen Germans were mixed up in a wild fight in the semi-darkness, while below the imprisoned emigrants cried out in their terror at the noise of fighting above them.

Weapons have a superiority over bare fists, and the mutineers could not indefinitely hold out against the captain's firearms and the iron staves of the emigrant volunteers. So the crew retreated, and Samuels, taking advantage of his gain, ordered them to throw their knives into the sea. Finnegan stepped forward and, with coarse epithets and threats, defied the old man, but under the fierce gaze of their captain the others, one after another, cast their knives overboard, until only the leader remained with a weapon. He, seeing himself deserted, now sullenly flung his knife after the others.

The old Yankee skipper was not yet quite satisfied. He

[1] Just after 3.30 A.M.

must have an apology from Finnegan for the latter's affront to his dignity, and above all for suggesting that he was a coward. When the still defiant Finnegan refused to retract his insulting words the skipper whipped across a powerful blow at his head and knocked him down the fo'c'sle steps, where he lay at the bottom dazed and for the time being ceased to trouble anyone.

In the east the sun was appearing over the rim of the sea, and the night of peril was over. Captain Samuels had won, and the ship was safe from the lawless rule of the Bloody Forty. He gave the order he had given nearly two days before, "Haul taut the weather main-brace!" and this time the men took hold and hauled with a will. The cook was ordered to get them coffee, after which they were set to holystoning the deck, a job that is done with a bent back and suggests, in its posture, an attitude of complete subjection.

Finnegan, who had now recovered, was brought before the old tiger, Samuels, who once more demanded an apology. The equally spirited Finnegan refused to speak, so he was ordered to be ironed and put into the "sweat box," a narrow hole that would quickly break most spirits. Finnegan, in spite of his courage, was soon begging for mercy, and when brought on deck again was ready to confess himself beaten. But Samuels must have a complete submission, and so the fiery leader of the men apologized to the captain before his mates. He was then released and put to work holystoning, at which the whole crew was kept all day. The victory of the pious old tiger was complete. The fight being over and won, Samuels lectured the men

on the ways of evil, exhorting them to become humble Christian men, and growing so eloquent that he soon had his hard-bitten Bloody Forty growing lachrymose and sentimental in the *rôle* of reformed men.

And, like a fairy story, the account ends happily with the crew cheering their conqueror when they left the ship in New York. The tigers had met a super-tiger.

When a ship puts out to sea and leaves the land behind she becomes virtually a little world of her own, self-contained in every sense of the word. She is a miniature kingdom afloat, with her own charter and her own king. That royal office is held by the captain, whose decision on board is final, and if he is disobeyed he has the laws of the land to support him. For a sailor, then, to disobey his captain is a serious offence. He is not only defying the police of his kingdom, but flaunting the judge and the very head of the State himself. If contempt for the ship's discipline spreads from one man to another among the crew you have that tense and dramatic situation called "a mutiny on the high seas," and then anything is likely to happen.

It is always unwise to excuse conduct which is risking the welfare and safety of a community of people; but there is no denying the fact that many revolts against authority, both at sea and on land, have been sorely provoked by the harshness or the selfishness of the rulers. Human nature is, on the whole, friendly and eager to live in peace and harmony, but life on board ship—especially in the fo'c'sle—is not conducive to bringing out the gentler side of men's natures, and in every company there is likely to be one discontented spirit who may infect others with his views. Given a ship where the commander is a hard disciplinarian, and a voyage that has been long and tedious, you have the stage set for a mutiny if there are a few bold and rebellious spirits among the crew.

That was exactly the state of affairs on board the armed transport H.M.S. *Bounty*, in the Pacific, on April 24, 1789. The *Bounty* had left Spithead on December 23, 1787, bound on a voyage to the Society Islands, where she was to collect breadfruit plants and transport them to the West Indies, to replant them there, with the ultimate object of cultivating the breadfruit in those islands. The *Bounty* carried a light armament of four 4-pounders and ten swivels, with a company of forty-four men, including the officers.

THE "BOUNTY"

She was stored and victualled for eighteen months, and her commander, Lieutenant William Bligh, had instructions to proceed directly to the Society Islands, *via* Cape Horn, load up with breadfruit and other plants, and return by way of the Cape of Good Hope. One half of the plants were to be left at St Vincent for the benefit of the Windward Islands, and the remainder taken on to the West Indies. After the voyage had begun Lieutenant Bligh divided the company, which included two gardeners, into three watches, with Mr Fletcher Christian, one of the mates, as head of the third watch. This gentleman's name is mentioned because of the prominent part he was to take in the drama that followed. The passage down the Atlantic was not a happy one, being marked by mishaps and discontent among the crew—a condition of affairs that was, in part, provoked by

the harsh discipline of the commander. Some of the food was spoiling, and Bligh decided to run for Otaheite as quickly as possible, in the meantime reducing the bread allowance. On March 2 he gave Fletcher Christian a written order to act as lieutenant, a power which Christian was presently to misuse to his own advantage. Some time later Bligh ordered Seaman Matthew Quintal to receive twenty-four lashes for "insolence and mutinous behaviour." Then, in latitude 60° S., the ship ran into such heavy gales that Bligh decided to make for the Cape of Good Hope, which they reached on May 23. There they found better weather, and at Simon's Bay the ship was recaulked while the sails and rigging were overhauled. They then stood for Otaheite, which was reached on October 25, after losing one seaman, who died aboard during the passage. The *Bounty* remained in the neighbourhood until March 31 of the following year, when she left with over a thousand breadfruit plants on board, having accomplished the first object of the voyage successfully. The ship now stood for Tofoa, and her company settled down to the routine of life at sea after many months of cruising among the islands, much of this time having been spent at anchor. The night-watches on board were arranged so that the master had the first watch, the gunner the middle, and the mate, Christian, the morning watch.

Just before sunrise on April 24, while Bligh was asleep, Christian, with the master-at-arms, the gunner's mate, and a seaman, crept quietly down the companion under the poop and burst into the captain's cabin, where they bound his hands behind his back and threatened him with instant death if he made the least noise. Bligh, whatever may have been his faults, was not a coward, and he took no notice of the mutineers' threats. Despite their violence and ferocious looks, he called at the top of his voice to warn his officers; but it was too late for help from them, for they

had already been secured in their cabins by the mutineers, who had planned their work very carefully beforehand. The leaders seemed to be well supported by others of the crew, for outside Bligh's cabin door three seamen stood with muskets and bayonets. Within his cabin were the three leaders and a seaman, and further resistance was hopeless; yet Bligh would not submit to the will of the mutineers, and had to be dragged out of his cabin and hauled up the companion-ladder, where he was forced to stand on deck in his shirt abaft the mizen-mast. Still having his tongue free, he demanded to know the reason for such violence, and was threatened with death if he did not keep quiet. Here one wonders whether the mutineers were quite as ferocious as they tried to appear, for Bligh continued to protest to the end, despite threats which were never carried out. They probably feared to carry their violence to the extent of murder, though many of them must have known that their treatment of the officers and some of the loyal crew was likely to end in their death.

The scene that confronted Bligh when he stood hand-bound on the deck in his shirt in the cool of the morning must have been sufficiently alarming when he guessed its import. By the fore hatch were posted armed sentinels, and the boatswain stood in the waist superintending the work of getting the boat over. When it was afloat and the two midshipmen, Hayward and Hallet, with the clerk, Mr Samuel, were ordered into it, Captain Bligh knew that that could only mean one thing. The mutineers meant to cast adrift their officers and perhaps some of the crew. Such proceedings were so inhuman that Bligh again raised his voice in loud protest, and again was met with threats of sudden death if he did not hold his tongue. Then followed a sort of roll-call. Certain names were called out by Christian, and the men had to step forward and climb over into the launch, which was kept alongside the ship

by the painter held by one of the mutineers. As a concession to the softer feelings among some of his mates Christian allowed those going in the boat to collect and take with them certain useful things for which they asked, such as some canvas, twine, fish-line, cordage, and a 28-gallon cask of water, also a small quantity of rum and wine in bottles. For food they were allowed to take a sack containing 150 lb. of ship's biscuit, called bread at sea, but really something much less palatable. Christian and his men were in some doubt whether to let the chief carpenter go, but as he was not one of them they decided to send him in the boat with the others, and after a great deal of argument and loud opposition from some of the mutineers he was allowed to take his tool-chest. All the while Bligh, who by now had been allowed to have his clothes, was shouting himself hoarse. In his statement to the Admiralty afterward he told how, before he was put into the boat, he had temporarily lost his voice through the nervous strain and the vociferous protests that he continued to make while on deck.

There was a great deal of confusion in the mutineers' camp, due to differences of opinion and the lack of discipline among the wilder spirits. Each wanted to advise the rest. Some swore that if the tool-chest was allowed in the boat Bligh would have a vessel built within a month, and then find his way back to civilization to set the Navy after them. Others thought it did not matter much what the castaways took, believing that they would never reach land in the small launch, a craft only 23 feet long, and they laughed at the helplessness of the men in the deeply laden boat.

Four of the crew, hitherto standing back, decided that they preferred to go in the boat with the others, but the mutineers ordered them back, and they then reminded Bligh that they were loyal men. The officers were now brought up from below and roughly ordered over the side.

Of the officers of the *Bounty* Bligh now alone remained on board. Fletcher Christian turned to him and said, "Come, Captain Bligh, your officers and men are in the boat, and you must go with them. If you make the least resistance you'll be instantly put to death." And Bligh in his report afterward wrote:

> Notwithstanding the roughness with which I was treated, the remembrance of past kindness produced some sign of remorse in Christian. When they were forcing me into the ship, I asked him if this was the proper return for the many instances he had received of my friendship. He appeared disturbed at my question and answered with much emotion, "That—Captain Bligh—that is the thing."

Bligh was allowed a compass and quadrant, but no sextant or maps. The mutineers were not anxious to make it easy for the castaways. As the commander was thrust over the side he asked for arms for protection against savages, and four cutlasses were thrown into the boat, but no fire-arms. When the painter was cast loose some one threw down a few pieces of pork and some extra clothes, and as the launch veered astern the armourer and carpenters still on the *Bounty* called out to Bligh to remember that they had had no hand in the business—a rash act, for in doing this they were subjecting themselves to the future vengeance of the mutineers.

After this the ship bore away to the north-west, and the *Bounty's* launch started out on what proved to be the longest unbroken passage ever made by a small boat, either before or since. Their experiences and how they eventually came to a settlement of white people are told elsewhere in this book (pp. 142–153).

As for the mutineers, their subsequent history was not a happy one. When Bligh got back to England his story excited the greatest interest everywhere, and he himself was promoted to the rank of commander. As soon as it could

be got ready the frigate *Pandora*, with Captain Edwards in command, was dispatched to Otaheite (Tahiti) to search for the *Bounty* and apprehend the mutineers. The frigate reached Matavai Bay in March 1791, and before the anchor was let go a canoe containing a white man was seen coming off toward the ship. Paddling alongside and climbing on board, the white man frankly announced that he was Joseph

Coleman, late armourer of the *Bounty*. Shortly afterward two more white men were seen coming out from the shore in canoes, and these proved to be Heywood and Stuart, two midshipmen from the *Bounty*. They at once surrendered themselves to Captain Edwards. Two days later fourteen others came on board the *Pandora* and gave themselves up, saying that there were sixteen of them altogether, but that two men had fled into the mountains when they saw the ship. The men who surrendered seem to have been treated with great severity by Captain Edwards. They were heavily ironed and fastened below decks, and not allowed out for exercise or fresh air, their food being let down to them through a small hatch opening. From

the prisoners Edwards learned that, with Fletcher Christian as leader, the *Bounty* was brought to the island of Tubuai, after setting adrift the boat party. The intention was to settle there, but as so much opposition was offered by the natives the attempt was given up, and the *Bounty* had returned to Tahiti, where, by making false promises, the mutineers had obtained large quantities of provisions and live stock from the natives. Taking with them eight native men, twelve women, and seven boys, they again sailed for Tubuai, where they landed and built a fort. But to the island paradise they brought only discord and trouble. The sailors treated the natives abominably, and when quarrels broke out and Christian found his authority on the wane he called a meeting to discuss what they should do. After some dispute it was decided to abandon Tubuai and set up a community where there would be less trouble with the natives. They put to sea again, and presently came to the island of Matavai, where sixteen of the crew deserted the ship and went ashore. Christian and eight of his comrades sailed from there in September 1789 with six Tahitian men and twelve women, and had not been heard of since.

With this information Captain Edwards cruised about among the islands for three months, but, finding no further sign of the mutineers, sailed for Australia with his seventeen prisoners. On August 28, 1791, the *Pandora* had the misfortune to be wrecked on the rocks of the Great Barrier Reef, thirty-four of the crew and four prisoners going down with the ship. The survivors reached England, where the mutineers were tried by court-martial; six were condemned to death, only three being actually hanged. Among the three who escaped that fate was Heywood, one of the midshipmen of the *Bounty*, who lived to serve his country well and become an honoured and respected man.

Nearly twenty years passed by before any further news

of the *Bounty* and the remainder of her crew came to light. In 1808 the captain of an American schooner touched an island known as Pitcairn Island. It was thought to be uninhabited, but people speaking English were found to be living there. They informed the captain that they were descendants of the men of the *Bounty* and that one of the men, Alexander Smith, was still living. The news of his discovery was taken to Sir Sidney Smith, British representative at Valparaiso, but nothing was done about it at the time, the Government having their hands full with affairs at home. Then, in 1814, two British men-of-war cruising in the Pacific sighted Pitcairn Island, and on approaching closer were surprised to find the land obviously under artificial cultivation. As they sailed in close to the shore a small canoe, in which was a young man of swarthy complexion, approached the ship and hailed those on board in fluent English. When asked who he was he replied readily enough that his name was Thursday October Christian, son of the late Fletcher Christian, of the ship *Bounty*. He was a handsome young man, twenty-four years old, and, though speaking correct English, was dressed like a native—that is, he wore hardly any clothes at all, his sole garments being a loincloth and a straw hat! His companion, also a half-caste, was George Young, son of a late midshipman of the *Bounty*.

Officers from the men-of-war went ashore, and from the mutineers' descendants heard of the wanderings of the *Bounty* and the early days of the crew on Pitcairn Island. Fletcher Christian, who remained the leader to his death, decided on Pitcairn because its almost inaccessible shores made a bad landing-place for boats and an ideal place to defend against invaders. After much trouble the live stock and the food were landed, together with everything else they could remove from the ship. She was then set on fire to destroy all trace of her. The community divided

the island into nine parts, and the semblance of a government was set up, ruled over by the redoubtable Fletcher Christian. But the white men treated the Tahitians as little better than slaves, until the disillusioned natives revolted. There was a quarrel which ended in five white sailors getting killed, one of them being Fletcher Christian. And so the stormy career of the famous *Bounty* mutiny at last came to an end.

CHAPTER V

The "Globe" : The "Sharon" : The Spithead Mutiny

CONSIDERING the harshness and brutality under which many old-time ships were sailed, it is surprising that mutinies were not more common than they were. And the comparative rarity of open revolt on board ship in past times speaks for the long-suffering patience of the foremast hand. Most of the old captains and their officers depended on intimidation to run their ships. They had the law behind them, and if they abused their privileges the ignorant sailors submitted because one man alone cannot successfully defy armed authority, for only the officers were permitted to carry fire-arms on merchant ships. A man with a grievance, whether imaginary or real, knew that if he dared to take any personal action to obtain redress he would not get very far in carrying out his intentions. He knew that his mates would not support him, so strong was their respect for custom and authority and so great their fear of being implicated in a mutiny—the crime of crimes at sea. Even to send a petition to the captain was frequently regarded as such a serious step that the men signed it in a circle, or affixed their names in the form of the spokes of a wheel, each signature radiating from the centre so that

the responsibility of leadership could be attached to no man. A "round robin" it was aptly named. Not that we suggest that all officers were brutal tyrants, though undoubtedly most of the old-time ships' officers were a hardened lot of men, almost devoid of compassionate feelings. So when a particularly harsh officer worked his tyranny on a crowd of desperate men possessed of a leader the result was mutiny.

Mutinies were naturally more frequent on long-voyage ships than on vessels whose passage from land to land was of comparatively short duration. A type of ship whose crews may sometimes have had good provocation to mutiny was the whaler. They sailed on cruises lasting for two, three, or four years, and the sort of life the men lived was one likely to encourage all the brutal instincts in men from quarrelling to murder.

In the story of the Nantucket whaler *Globe* we see a mutiny at its worst. Here is a revolt that started with a reasonable grievance and ended in sordid crime that no grievance could excuse.

The *Globe*, commanded by Captain Worth, left Edgartown, Massachusetts, in December 1822, with a crew of twenty, bound on a whaling cruise in the Pacific Ocean. The men were an unusually brutal crowd, even for an old-time whaling-ship, and from the start there was dissatisfaction and grumbling among them. They complained about the food (most likely with good reason), about the ship, and about the officers. Whether their complaints were justified or not we cannot tell, but probably both parties were to blame. However, a number of the crew planned to desert the ship at the first opportunity. But before the chance came the trouble between officers and crew came to a head, and an ugly incident happened. This was in January 1824, when the ship had been at sea over a year.

There was some disorder on the deck, during which one

of the crew, a certain Joseph Thomas, made an insulting remark to Captain Worth, who thereupon flogged Thomas with a rope's end while the others sullenly looked on. After the flogging some of the crew became more morose than ever, and their attitude was threatening; but the officers seem not to have taken any special precautions for their own safety. It was not their habit to stand watch at night, so they continued to sleep all night below, leaving the watch on deck in charge of the boat-steerers, who occupied a position similar to that of a petty-officer. One night, some time after the flogging incident, when the ship was riding on a gentle swell and the stars filled the dark sky overhead, a young seaman, sixteen years old, named Comstock, was at the wheel. The night was warm, and the young man had experienced difficulty in keeping awake, but at last his watch came to an end, and he swung the rattle used on whalers to summon the relief. No sooner had the loud clatter of the rattle broken the silence of the night than young Comstock's brother appeared, and in a hoarse whisper commanded the boy not to make another sound, for if he made the least noise he would be sent into hell. The frightened youth then noticed four dark forms creeping toward the companion-ladder to the cabin, and as they noiselessly descended the light of the binnacle glinted on the bright blades of boarding knives[1] and axes.

[1] Knives 4 feet long used for cutting blubber.

Down in the cabin a deadly struggle took place. The captain was killed as he lay in his hammock, and then the murderers attacked the second and third mates in their berths, killing them after a desperate resistance. The mate was slain in the main saloon, where he had fought his way after being awakened from his sleep. The dreadful work done, the mutineers now threw the bodies of the four men overboard, and Comstock took command of the ship.

Half a dozen men forced their will upon the others, and a course was set for the Mulgrave Islands, but this did not accord with the wishes of some, who consequently started plotting to take the ship. They were discovered by the alert Comstock, and, with an almost grotesque solemnity, ordered to stand on trial. After a hearing that was marked by ribald jestings and cruelty, one of the plotters, a negro, was condemned to death and forthwith strung at the yard-arm. This swift retribution seemed to have sobered the secessionists, for we hear of no more trouble from them while at sea. After cruising about in search of an island retreat on which to settle they presently found a delightful spot whereon to found their pirates' paradise. A large raft was built as a landing-stage, and most of the ship's stores of beef, pork, barrels of brown sugar, bread, molasses, rum, and dried fruits, besides tools, clothing, cordage, tarpaulins, and cooking-pots, were taken ashore.

Alas! this purely masculine republic was not to last long in content. Quarrels ensued, and the arch-rascal, Comstock, was killed, his place being taken by one Payne. It must be remembered that not all the men were willing parties to the revolt, and one night, while Payne and his cronies were ashore, a boat-steerer named Smith, with six others, raised the anchor and, in the dark, stole away with the ship. In the course of time they brought the *Globe* to Valparaiso, where they were arrested. Later they were

released and sent home. Their case came up again in New England, but the judge acquitted them all.

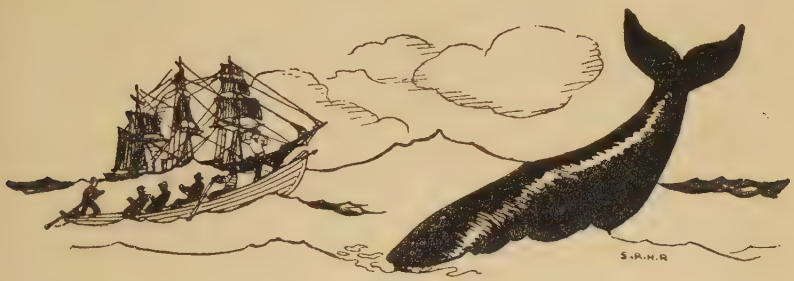
Meanwhile in the far Pacific matters were not going well on the island where Payne and his company were marooned. They antagonized the natives there by brutalities which precipitated a battle between brown and white, during which one white was killed, the rest surrendering. The treacherous natives then massacred all but two, these being Hussey and Lay, two youths eighteen years of age who were not in sympathy with the mutineers. For two years the natives guarded them jealously lest any ships stopping at the islands should discover the white prisoners, but one day the American schooner *Dolphin* put in at the island, and Lay contrived to get to the sailors who had come ashore. When they heard that there was another white man in the jungle they forced his captors to give him up. Thus the two survivors were rescued and the drama ended.

The youngest whaling-ship captain that ever sailed was a New Englander named Benjamin Clough, for when he was given command of the whaler *Niagara* he was only twenty-one years old. The story of his rapid promotion from third mate to captain is one of the most remarkable in the annals of the sea.

In 1842 there sailed from Fairhaven, Massachusetts, the whaler *Sharon* on a whaling voyage. Cruising down

the Atlantic, keeping a sharp look-out for whales, Captain Norris decided to put in at Ascension Island for water and wood. While there eleven of the crew deserted, so that when the ship again sailed she was short-handed, there being only seventeen men left on board, including the officers. Among these was young Benjamin Clough, who by diligence and smartness in carrying out his duties had risen to the position of third mate, although only nineteen years old.

On Sunday, November 6, ten days after leaving Ascension Island, whales were raised, and two boats were



immediately lowered to go in pursuit, Captain Norris, a Portuguese boy named José dos Rios, and three natives remaining on board in charge of the ship. Four natives had been taken along after some of the crew had deserted, and three of these men were now in the ship, the fourth being in one of the boats. After a short chase a whale was killed. The ship bore down to where the dead whale lay, and it was made fast alongside, the boats pulling away after other whales that were seen spouting in the offing. About three o'clock in the afternoon, when the whalemen were some distance from the ship, they noticed that her flag hung at half-mast—the recognized signal for recall. The chase was at once abandoned, and the boats' crews bent the long 14-foot oars as they forced their craft through the seas toward the ship to discover the meaning of this unwonted signal. When they had approached to within

hailing distance the three natives on board appeared at the rail, brandishing axes and boarding knives in such a threatening manner that the whalemen at once ceased rowing to contemplate with amazement this strange spectacle. High up in the rigging the terrified Portuguese boy was perched, where he had ascended as a monkey would climb a tree to escape a pack of jackals.

The excited natives now cried out something to their mate, who, it will be remembered, was in one of the boats, and from their gestures it appeared that they were telling him to jump overboard and swim to the ship. This fellow, however, deemed it wiser to remain where he was, for had he attempted to leave the boat the harpooners would have killed him ere he reached the ship's side. At his refusal to join them the natives on board threw an axe at him, but it did no more damage than to rip the shirt of one of the men. They then began hurling missiles, ivory belaying pins, marling spikes, and knives, until the boats' crews drew off to a safe distance, where they discussed what to do.

In the meantime, those in the boats learned from the boy aloft that Captain Norris had been slain by the three natives, and that his body lay on the deck where they had left it. To retake the ship was a dangerous job, though the whalemen had no alternative but to try, for to remain long in the middle of the South Atlantic without food or water would mean death to them all. They had the choice between certain death by starvation and the risk of being killed in trying to take the ship, but Mr Smith, the mate, was flatly against making the attempt at present, preferring discretion to valour.

The boy was hailed and told to cut the halyards of the main-mast yards, and then slide along the forestay to the fore-mast to cut the halyards on the fore-mast yards, in order to make it impossible for the mutineers to sail the ship away from the men in the boats. It should be explained

that the Islanders, as the natives are called, are afraid to venture aloft, hence the security of the boy once he had gained the rigging.

In the boats there was much heated discussion, and some were for trying to reach the nearest land—an absurd notion which was at once vetoed by the majority. Still, the mate refused to attempt to board, notwithstanding the entreaties of the young Benjamin Clough, who was for taking the ship by assault in a bold frontal attack, despite the certainty that some of the men would be butchered by the maddened natives on board. Clough twice attempted to harpoon one of the blacks as he appeared on the bulwarks, but each time the weapon fell short, checked by the line it was attached to. He asked the mate to have the boat rowed nearer, but this the latter refused to do because of the danger from the missiles which the mutineers hurled at them whenever they approached too close. Clough now suggested that the boy should cut the foreroyal stay,[1] saying that when it dropped into the sea he (Clough) would climb up it with the harpoon in his teeth, to the end of the jib-boom, and charge the mutineers. Smith, the mate, consented to this desperate plan, but, fortunately for Clough, the boy was too fatigued to climb the royal pole and cut the stay. Had he done so and thus enabled Clough to come aboard, the plucky youth would most assuredly have been slain.

The boats continued to keep out of range of missiles thrown from the ship until dark, but when night had at last come over the sea they again approached the vessel, and the youthful third mate determined to attempt alone what the rest of the men feared to do together. Stripping off his clothes and putting a sheath-knife between his teeth, he silently let himself into the water and swam toward the ship. Two sharks followed him, but made no attempt to

[1] These were the days of hemp rigging.

attack, probably because they were gorged with the dead whale, which lay alongside. Swimming under the counter, Clough pulled himself on to the rudder, and then climbed up and through one of the cabin windows. In the dark cabin the intrepid youth groped about until he found two cutlasses and some muskets, along with a canister of powder. He at once began to load the muskets, but while doing this he caught the sound of naked feet on the companion-ladder. Snatching up a cutlass he waited until the fellow had descended, and then attacked him. A bloody fight in the darkness followed, and the native fell, sorely wounded, but not until he had inflicted such injuries to Clough's right hand as to disable it completely.

The sound made by the men fighting had attracted another of the mutineers, and the intrepid Clough caught sight of his dark silhouette at the top of the companion-ladder, poised to hurl a cutting-in spade. With his left hand Clough grasped one of the muskets, which he had leaned against the door in readiness, and without aiming pulled the trigger. The native, shot dead, fell forward down the ladder, and in the darkness the deadly blade, in falling, caught Clough's left arm, cutting it to the bone above the elbow. Being entirely disabled, with one useless arm and a maimed hand, the youth now staggered to

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the cabin windows and called for help, but, incredible as it seems, the mate still refused to come on board with the men.

The disabled Clough now tried in the darkness to bind his wound and staunch the blood, but after some attempts lay down on the cabin floor half fainting, and at the mercy of the third murderous black prowling somewhere on the deck above. Half an hour passed by, and the mate and the men, hearing no sound come from the ship, cautiously approached the stern, and gripping the sills with boat-hooks, swarmed up and into the dark cabin, where, with their tinder-boxes, they soon had a light. Clough was found where he had lain down, very weak but not beyond hope of recovery. Of the two natives lying on the floor, one was dead and the other still conscious. This one the whalemen savagely shot and threw overboard along with his dead companion. When they went on deck the Portuguese boy descended the rigging and ran toward his belated rescuers, and the third native, in a panic of fear, dived into the sea, where he swam about all night. Not being able to swim a thousand miles or so, he climbed on board in the morning to surrender. He was clapped in irons and later delivered to the police at Sydney, Australia, where his history ends. The dead captain was given a sea burial, and the ship was then set on her course for home. During the passage Clough remained an invalid, but his wounds all healed in time, and in recognition of his courage and enterprise he was awarded the command of a ship specially built for him, and thus became the youngest master that had ever sailed out of Fairhaven.

If the life of the ordinary seaman in the Navy in Nelson's day, and before, had not been so harsh and ill-paid there never would have been any need of press-gangs to obtain crews for men-of-war. The fact that the Government sanctioned such an odious practice bears eloquent testimony

to the unpopularity of the naval service among the common sailors. The Georgian seaman preferred sailing in merchantmen, where the pay was better, and where he was not flogged for breaches of petty rules. The consequence was that, the demands of the Navy for crews being insufficiently met by volunteers, men had to be secured by force, a practice which in the merchant service, at a later day, was called "shanghaieing."

The discipline on board a man-of-war in the eighteenth

century was nothing less than barbarous. Men were flogged for petty offences that nowadays would receive no more than an admonition. They were ducked in the sea from the yard-arm at the end of a rope until half drowned. They were 'keelhauled'[1] and 'flogged through the fleet,' this last being a most ferocious and uncivilized punishment, the culprit being sent aboard every ship in the squadron to be flogged, usually until the unfortunate wretch died. To be flogged through the fleet was practically equivalent to death by torture. Even a simple flogging was a thing to be dreaded by the culprit, for the boatswain, or whoever carried out the punishment, did not spare his victim through any fineness of feeling. He laid on the lash with all the

[1] Dragged under the keel at the end of a line.

strength of his powerful arm, so that the prisoner required the services of the surgeon when the ordeal was over.

Times have changed. Flogging has gone, along with the press-gang and similar abuses of authority, and men have gained in self-respect by being treated more like human beings and less like brutes. It is true that the eighteenth-century Jack Tar was a wild creature, at best only half tamed. But he was not a bad fellow at heart, and took the good with the ill as part of the life of Jack afloat. No doubt his happy-go-lucky nature was taken advantage of by his superiors at the Admiralty; but they pushed him too far, until the day came when he would submit no longer to the injustices he had endured. He decided to protest, and his protest took shape in the famous mutiny at Spithead.

The seamen were shockingly ill paid, and had more than once petitioned for an increase in pay and a more fair distribution of the prize-money. The prevailing system of dividing prize-money was to give the admirals and chief officers the greater part, the rest to be divided into small shares among the crews, leaving them almost nothing when each man came up for his portion. These two matters alone had been the cause of some unrest and dissatisfaction, but when to these were added the degrading system of

punishment and provisions so vile that a dog would have rejected them, it is a wonder that the mutiny was delayed so long. The men were expected to eat food that was frequently rotten, supplied by corrupt purveyors and unscrupulous contractors. Finally there was the protest against the system of remunerating the Navy pursers. The Government did not give these officers salaries like the rest. They received their pay by the extraordinary system of deducting two ounces from every pound of provisions allowed to the men. The same applied to the dole of beer and grog; and with such a system there was every encouragement to an unscrupulous purser to line his pockets at the expense of the men.

The men's frequent petitions to have their conditions improved had been neglected and put off by the authorities until the seamen at Portsmouth decided to take the serious step of mutiny.[1] But first they made another attempt to induce the Admiralty to grant them an increase in pay and better food. The petition was from the principal men-of-war lying at Spithead, and was sent to the commander of the Channel Fleet, Lord Howe, requesting him to intercede with the Admiralty for the men. Instead of forwarding the petition to the Admiralty, the commander passed it on to the Port-Admiral, Sir Peter Parker, and to Lord Bridport, a commander in the Channel Fleet, both of whom treated it as of no importance, and would have let the matter fall into oblivion, as had happened to former petitions, had not Parker been alarmed by the rumour that the men were conspiring to mutiny. He immediately sent off word to the Admiralty, who decided to test the truth of the report by ordering the fleet to put to sea.

At Spithead the signal was made to weigh anchor, and at once the men's resolution became apparent. Instead of manning the windlass and hauling on halliards and braces,

[1] April 1797.

the crews climbed into the rigging and gave voice to vociferous huzzas. Having declared themselves, they next took charge of the sacred quarter-decks, where once they would have been flogged for intruding without permission but now gave orders while their officers stood by, powerless against the concerted action of so many determined men.

Having command of the fleet, they sent two delegates from each ship to convene on Lord Howe's flagship, *Queen Charlotte*. The following day the crews of all the ships pledged loyalty to the cause upon which they had entered, to stand together until the common aim was accomplished. Some of their officers were kept on board as hostages while others (the unpopular ones) were put ashore. Actually it was a very gentlemanly mutiny, the seamen taking their pledges with great seriousness and keeping strict discipline among themselves, the confined officers meanwhile being treated with every mark of respect. Having succeeded so far, the leaders then sent a petition to the Admiralty couched in respectful terms, again stating their grievances and requesting that they should be given favourable attention. It was, in fact, a most mild and reasonable petition, and my Lords of the Admiralty hurried down from London to Portsmouth to confer with the admirals there. There was much talk on both sides, my Lords and admirals not wishing to admit responsibility for the scandalous neglect of the men. So, in the end, they offered to grant the rebels part of their demands; but the latter, being for the present masters of the situation, very naturally refused to accept such parsimonious terms, vowing not to raise an anchor until their just and reasonable demands were accepted. The Admiralty could hardly have acquiesced in this ultimatum without great loss of dignity, so they suggested better terms than their previous offer, but still refused to grant certain demands in the men's petition, one of them being the issue of vegetables while in port.

When the seamen's representatives returned to the ships with this second restricted offer from the Admiralty committee the mutineers displayed less patience than they had hitherto shown by immediately running up the red flag on every ship, at the same time announcing that they would listen to no more bargaining, and that now nothing but a complete acceptance of their petition would satisfy them. The Government, seeing that it was checkmated, next tried the strategy of offering a free pardon to all the mutineers, but without mentioning their grievances. Lord Bridport, under a truce, carried this proclamation on board the *Royal George*, where he took it upon himself to announce that all the men's wrongs would be righted. On the receipt of this happy intelligence the red flag on the *Royal George* was hauled down, and all other ships at once followed her example.

This happened on April 23, and on May 7 Lord Bridport came on board the flagship and ordered the fleet to weigh anchor, word having been received that the French fleet at Brest had put to sea. But to the Admiral's great chagrin the crews refused duty. They had discovered how they had been tricked, and how at Westminster the Admiralty had dispelled all doubt as to their real intentions by issuing an order which was tantamount to ignoring the recent negotiations. The men's position was thus weakened, and fearing to lose what had been gained, they were driven to a resumption of the previous state of mutiny and treason.

One incident showed the state of feeling on both sides. On the *London* Vice-Admiral Colpoys assumed the old custom of tyrannous discipline to such a degree that the men protested in no ambiguous terms. One of them, a gunner, refused to obey an order given by a first lieutenant named Simpson, and, persisting in his refusal, was shot dead by the officer. This drove the men into a frenzy, and after overpowering the officers they prepared to hang

the first lieutenant at the yard-arm. The Admiral, rushing forward, pleaded before them to spare Simpson's life, taking the blame upon himself for the death of the gunner, by pointing out that Simpson had only obeyed his orders. At this the men released the miserable lieutenant, thereby showing him more mercy than he had shown them. After Simpson was released he and all the officers, including the Admiral, were locked in their cabins while the marines were disarmed and sent below under guard.

The new revolt had spread to all the fleet, and from the 7th of May to the 11th the crews were again in open mutiny. This brought the Admiralty to its senses, and forthwith the aged Lord Howe was sent down in person to Portsmouth with a hastily passed Act of Parliament, granting the men their petition on all points. When the old Admiral stepped aboard the flagship, and from the quarter-deck talked to the men, their hearts were won over by his friendly overtures. His power with them was so great that he persuaded them to send a petition for royal pardon—an act of courtesy and good feeling more than anything else, considering that the men had won their case. So the petition for pardon was sent, but, strange as it sounds, it was accompanied by the announcement that none of the men would consent ever again to serve under the Admiral or officers of the *London*. This being agreed to by the

Admiralty, the red flag was again hauled down, and the men's representatives waited upon Lord Howe to express their gratitude and thanks for his services to them. The old Admiral showed the same fair spirit he had shown all through the trying period, and invited a deputation of the men to lunch with him. When luncheon was over they escorted their host round the fleet, after which he was carried on their shoulders to the Governor's residence ashore. Thanks to the reasonable temper of the crews and their high esteem for Lord Howe, the most serious mutiny in British naval history was brought to an end, and a very dangerous situation to the country overcome. Not only was a dangerous period passed, but, what is more important, no bitter feelings were left to sow the seeds of a later revolt.

While Spithead was the principal centre of discontent, the fleet stationed at Sheerness, at the mouth of the Thames, had mutinied in sympathy with the Portsmouth men; but though the latter had concluded an honourable peace with the Admiralty, the seamen at Sheerness had not accepted the terms, and continued to refuse to return to duty. In this action they were prompted by a tub-thumping sailor named Richard Parker. This Parker was too ambitious to meet with much sympathy from reasonable men, for he took advantage of the occasion to carry his demands far beyond those which immediately concerned the sailors themselves. Having the persuasive gift of oratory, he incited the crews to take a stand independently of their comrades at Portsmouth, and on May 20 their demands were sent to London. These were so preposterous and arrogant that the Admiralty quite rightly rejected them at once. Three days later the red flag was hoisted on all the men-of-war at Sheerness, and they were then drawn in line across the mouth of the river to cut off communication with London by sea. By so doing the mutineers counted on intimidating the Admiralty to the point of submission, but

they reckoned without their host, for the Government immediately took stern measures to bring the men to reason. All the buoys which marked the channels at the mouth of the Thames were taken up, and heavy batteries were placed on both sides of the river ready to fire red-hot shot at the fleet. At the same time a proclamation was issued prohibiting all communication with the ships.

Finding the whole country against them, the mutineers now displayed a change of spirit by hauling down the red flag and showing their loyalty by firing a salute of guns on June 4, the King's birthday. The salute was heard to come from every ship but the *Sandwich*, whose guns remained silent. In this vessel was Parker, the firebrand, who still had sufficient power over his mates to induce them to persist in their defiance of the Government, but they too soon began to weary of his vapourings, and on June 13 (an unlucky day for him) they surrendered and delivered Parker, with some of his henchmen, over to the authorities. The leader was tried and executed by hanging at the yard-arm of his own ship on the 30th of the same month. So ended the mutiny at Sheerness, which was as discreditable to the participants as that at Spithead was honourable.

CHAPTER VI

The Recapture of the "Exchange" : Pierre le Grand : The "Revenge"

In the heyday of the buccaneers of the Spanish Main, when the mongrel crews of Spaniards, Portuguese, French, and Englishmen worked their will in the West Indies, where they could carry on their business without much interference from the various European Governments, there were other pirates that snapped their fingers at the navies of Spain, France, and England combined. These bravoes were the Barbary corsairs, the Algerian pirates who terrorized all merchantmen until the beginning of 1800, when certain European Powers joined with the new republic of the United States in a concerted action to end this humiliating state of affairs for ever.

In the time of James I the Moors, sailing from Algiers, did pretty well what they pleased in the Eastern Atlantic. They had become so bold that they cruised into the Channel to take English and French merchant vessels and sell their crews into slavery.

This, then, was the state of affairs in 1621 when two small merchant ships of Plymouth, the *Bonaventure* and the *Nicholas*, sailed in company for Gibraltar. On November 18 they had altered their course for the Straits and were within sight of the rock when five rakish-looking sloops

were seen to be bearing down upon them. The two bluff-bowed merchantmen ran for Gibraltar, but they were too slow, and after a short chase the Moors took them both as prizes. Twelve of the *Bonaventure's* crew were put ashore on the African coast, but Captain Rawlins of the *Nicholas* and five of his men were brought on board the pirate captain's vessel, where they were treated better than they had expected. On board the *Nicholas* remained four of the original crew with a prize crew of thirteen Moors. As they proceeded to Algiers in company a storm arose during the night and the *Nicholas* was lost sight of, but turned up later at Algiers, after the pirates had been in the port some days. When the English prisoners were collected they were taken, according to custom, to the *bashaw*, the local governor, that he might view the captives and, as it were, have first refusal. He selected for himself a healthy-looking seaman, and ordered the rest to be taken to the *souk* (market-place) to be sold into slavery.

Here our Devonshire sailor, Captain John Rawlins, had to suffer the indignity of being bartered for in a public market-place, while a group of chattering Algerines, as possible buyers, made ribald sport of the *Inglesi*. The captain of the pirate sloops bought Rawlins for a small bag of sequins, but on finding that his purchase possessed one crippled hand sold him, with two more sailors, to a renegade Englishman living among the Moors, one John Goodal. This renegade was in partnership with some men who had bought a brig, the *Exchange*, of Bristol, another prize which was then lying unrigged alongside the mole, and needing skilled seamen to take charge of her.

When John Goodal purchased the bluff Devon sailor, Captain Rawlins, he felt pleased with his find, and at once sent him on board to assist in refitting the ship. But in buying Rawlins he was buying a packet of trouble, for this worthy chafed against his bondage and was secretly plan-

ning, by mutiny or any other desperate enterprise, to escape. The rigging and fitting out of the *Exchange* proceeded apace in the hands of the English seamen working under their swarthy taskmasters, and by the first week in January 1622 the erstwhile honest merchant vessel was ready to sail as a pirate ship. She was provided with twelve guns and had a crew of sixty-three Moors, with a sprinkling of white seamen to aid in sailing her. These were nine English slaves, as well as a Frenchman and four Hollanders who were free men; and lastly there were two renegades, an Englishman and a Dutchman, who served as gunners under Goodal.

The *Exchange* was headed north on the advice of Rawlins, who seems to have told the captain some story of rich prizes in the English Channel, where the unsuspecting trading sloops and barques running between England and France were easy prey to any resourceful and determined man. The captain must have been a stupid fellow to allow himself to be influenced by a man whom he had every reason to regard as an enemy, and, as we shall see, this stupidity was presently to bring about his downfall. On the other hand, Rawlins was an astute, enterprising man, with his full share of reckless courage. To all appearances he was an obedient servant, doing his work in sailing the ship and never giving trouble to the Moorish officers, but behind his calm and seemingly indifferent expression brooded a mind with only one purpose in life—to escape. Quietly he went about his business and obeyed orders with the readiness of a willing and contented sailor, but all the while he was making his plans. Between his bunk and the planking of the ship he had secreted ropes, broad iron spikes, and hooks which might prove useful to fasten down hatches, scuttles, and gratings. With considerable risk to himself he had gradually got these things forward, where they were hidden against the day when they would be

needed. In the meantime he was cautiously sounding the white men on board. He began by finding out from the four Hollanders their ideas on escaping, being careful not to give the impression that he personally would think of such a thing. After two or three nights' talk, finding that they were in favour of trying to escape, he disclosed to them his secret scheme. They at once fell in with his suggestion, and before long had won over the renegades to the plan.

The Moorish captain continued to be unaware of the plotting going on in his own ship, and in the course of a few days had come up to the western entrance to the English Channel. It was a long way from his own Barbary coast and was not without its risks, this entering the enemy's own waters; but the tales of Rawlins lured the Moor on. And when, on January 16, off Torbay, a ship with a cargo of salt was taken and a prize crew of Algerines put on board her, the Moorish captain's confidence in the tales of Rawlins increased. With the exception of the mate and two men all the crew of the Torbay barque were taken on board the pirate vessel, and ten Moors and three white renegades put in their places. Before the white men left the pirate to go on board the prize Rawlins contrived to get a message to them which was to the effect that they must get in touch with the three Englishmen on board the prize and take the ship if they could. As for himself, he would make his attempt to escape that same night if possible.

The next morning, however, found Rawlins still in the position of a slave, and the Moors still unconscious of the impending mutiny. The pirate captain was now in a ferocious mood because the prize had disappeared during the night. He stamped about the quarter-deck, calling on Allah to curse the dogs of infidels who gave him so much trouble. And Rawlins, who was watching him, decided the time was ripe to carry out his plan.

When the enemy is in his fiercest mood would hardly

seem to be the time to attempt a desperate enterprise, but Rawlins must have thought otherwise. Waiting his chance, he respectfully approached the captain and informed him that the ship was taking water in the forward hold, which made her so low forward and so high aft that the water did not reach the pumps, which were amidships. He suggested that if the four heavy guns were brought aft the ship might be trimmed on an even keel, when the pumps could be got to work. So the guns were dragged aft, where two of them were swung round in such a position that they faced the binnacle. Then all hands were set to man the pumps, as the Moorish captain had become thoroughly alarmed at the report of so much water below. While most of the men, captors and captives alike, were busy at the pumps, Rawlins brought aft two slow matches, one concealed in a tin and the other between two spoons. Waiting until no one was looking in his direction, he put a match to the powder and fired a shot which smashed the binnacle to pieces and at once gave the alarm. The newly made prisoners had been enlisted in the plot and joined in the *mêlée* against the Moors. The English, having made sure of the strategical position by capturing the powder room, soon had the enemy at their mercy. The fight was quickly over, for the prisoners were shooting through cracks and loopholes at the Moors, who were in the open and could find no shelter from the fusillade of lead. Finding themselves beaten, they fell to begging for mercy, and the new masters of the situation, being no pirates, were disposed to grant mercy to all who submitted without treachery. But the fire of the mutineers had been so fierce that there were few left to surrender, and only the captain and five of his men were brought into Plymouth, where they were handed over to the town authorities and sent into Exeter. Their fate after that is unknown. As for the Torbay barque, she was recaptured by the white prisoners, who

had battened down hatches when most of the Moors were below, and, overcoming the rest, had sailed triumphantly into Penzance.

Thus did a handful of white men, with the resolution and courage that comes of desperation, recapture two British ships from the Barbary corsairs and deliver their pirate crews over to the English authorities.

It is frequently said that we may have anything if we want it badly enough. While that is a pleasant exaggeration, no doubt the seemingly impossible can often be accomplished when desire is great enough and sufficient resolution is behind it. The diverting and astounding story of the boatload of pirates who captured a treasure galleon is a case in point. This mere handful of men, driven by motives of envy and greed, performed a feat that, so far as we know, has never since been equalled for boldness.

Pierre le Grand, a native of Normandy, and claiming Dieppe as his birthplace, sailed as a pirate for years without conspicuous success. Chafing against such a run of ill-luck, and envious of the better fortune of some of his contemporaries, he had come to that state of mind when a man is ready for any insane adventure to retrieve his fortunes and his self-respect. While this mood was on him there appeared before Pierre's sullen eyes a fleet of Spanish treasure-ships, slowly coming up from the west. At once his crafty mind pictured the galleons' holds stored with specie and bullion, and he pondered upon how best to secure some of the treasure. The notion seemed preposterous, yet he continued to play with it until his fevered mind had actually formulated a plan to capture the biggest galleon in the convoy, which was now at anchor. Gathering his men round him, he explained what he proposed to do, and how he was ready to stake his life on this one last throw, to win or die in the attempt.

The plan was to wait until dark, when the pirates would row in a small boat up to the side of the galleon, and there, under the shadow of her steep sides, climb on board and take her by surprise. The whole success of the undertaking depended upon the element of surprise and the desperation of the attackers.

When the tropical night had fallen over the sea the pirates rowed toward the great ship. Noiselessly dipping their oars into the phosphorescent water they rounded the galleon's towering stern, where from the open windows of the Admiral's cabin came the sound of voices and laughter. Another moment and the little boat slid into the dark shadow of the galleon as rough hands reached out and fended off their craft, while the whispered order "Ready!" was waited for. Each desperate man, armed to the teeth with pistol and cutlass, had sworn to fight to the death if need be, and like leashed bloodhounds they waited in the shadows for permission to go. The surgeon meanwhile fumbled in the bottom of the boat until his hands found that for which he searched—the plug driven into the hole bored through the planking. Giving it a pull, it came out, and the little rippling sound of water entering the hole told him that his work was done. By sinking their boat they must remain on board the galleon as dead men or victors: there was no way of retreat.

The little party of desperate men climbed like monkeys up the chain plates and over the main rail on to the deck. Except for the occasional sound of voices coming from aft, all was quiet on the ship. The main deck was shrouded in darkness, only the tops of the guns being faintly visible where the rays of the moon touched them. In the foretop, among the faint black tracery of the rigging, hung the riding-light, giving a dull warm glow within its lanthorn windows. Below in the darkness, with the water already up to its thwarts, the boat was settling for its final plunge.

Creeping aft, the band of sea wolves gained the poop, where they took the look-out by surprise and slew him almost without making a sound. Pierre, leading a few men, overpowered the sentry at the companion entrance, and with a dramatic rush entered the main cabin, where

the Admiral and his officers were playing cards. This surprised gentleman, hearing the strange noise as of hurrying men in the companion way, had looked up from his game to find the room invaded by desperate-looking men who were holding pistols at the company and threatening death to any man who so much as dared to utter a sound. The Admiral and his officers, being at such a disadvantage, made no serious resistance, and were all soon prisoners, gagged and bound. The rest of the pirates had, in the meantime,

rushed into the gun-room and surprised the sleeping Spaniards, slaying any man who offered resistance. A short and bloody fight ensued in the semi-darkness, but the pirates had the advantage of surprise, and in a short time had driven the survivors on to the lower deck, where they were disarmed and fastened under hatches.

Pierre le Grand was out for treasure, and, unlike so many pirates, he did not kill for killing's sake. The galleon was in his power, and he was satisfied. The prisoners whom he did not require for working the ship were put into boats and ordered to make for land. With the rest he sailed away, unmolested by the other Spanish ships, who did not suspect the truth until it was too late to overtake the truant galleon. Having achieved his ambition, Le Grand went no more a-pirating, but settled down to a life of ease ashore.

But the news of his daring raid, when it reached the West Indies, had the effect of stirring every pirate in those parts with a desire to emulate such a daring exploit.

It can fairly be said that, of the many famous Elizabethan ships, the name that comes most easily to one's mind is not the *Mary Rose* (which sank so tragically), the *Black Pinnesse* (which brought the body of Sir Philip Sydney home), the *Jesus of Lubeck* (Hawkins's ship), or even the *Ark Royal* (Lord Howard's flagship), but the *Revenge*, which took part in the most gallant sea-fight in British naval history.

The *Revenge* was a typical Elizabethan man-of-war, with all the familiar features of her type—the high stern, the low waist, and the long falsework called the beak head, jutting out from the bows. Her three masts carried the round fighting tops from which 'topmen' could throw Greek fire or discharge small shot on to the enemy's decks. Her figurehead was a lion rampant, its gilded jaws open in defiance to the enemy. The stern was flat and highly

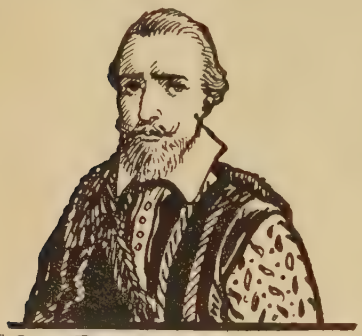
ornamented with carving incorporating the design *motif* of the British lion and the Tudor rose, with the initials E.R. Her tonnage was 500 tons; she carried a crew of 190 men, and had over forty guns. These last were very large for that period, many being 12 feet long, though not very efficient except at point-blank range. She is assumed to have been built at Chatham, in 1579, by the renowned Sir John Hawkins, and her fame rests, of course, on that heroic fight off Flores in 1591. As Francis Bacon wrote afterward, "This ship for the space of fifteen hours sate like a Stagge amongst Hounds and was seized and fought with in turns by fifteen great ships of Spaine: Part of a navy of fifty-five ships in all; the rest like Abettors looking on from a farre off."

Before leaving England on this history-making voyage she met with an accident that nearly finished her career there and then. While at anchor in the Medway off Rochester a heavy wind came up which developed into half a gale and capsized her, despite the fact that she was under bare poles, all canvas being stowed. And there she lay in the river for some time, her barnacle-encrusted hull floating keel upward, until she was hauled ashore and righted.

It used to be said in the days of oak and hemp that the Latins were better shipbuilders than the Britons, but inferior to them as seamen. Certainly in Nelson's time and earlier the French built finer frigates than the English, and when a French man-of-war was captured the English builders used her as a pattern from which to build vessels on similar lines. But the better seamanship of the British is proved by the evidence of the many sea-skirmishes and sea-actions that have taken place since King Alfred built the first English Navy. Drake's audacious exploits could not have been carried out with such success had not his extraordinary daring been coupled with superb seamanship.

But there are times when seamanship avails a sailor nothing, when his back is to the wall and manœuvring is no longer possible. This was the position in which Sir Richard Grenville found himself in the *Revenge* at Flores in August 1591. Three years before the Invincible Armada had been destroyed, but the sea-warfare dragged on, wasting lives and money, though perhaps adding lustre to the history of the Elizabethan Navy.

The *Revenge* was part of a squadron under the command of Lord Thomas Howard, sent out from England to intercept a fleet of treasure galleons bound for Spain from the West Indies. The squadron under Howard consisted of six men-of-war, three supply ships, the barque *Raleigh*, and three pinnaces. It sailed direct to the Azores, to await the arrival of the Spaniards, and made Flores, one of the western islands, the anchorage. Immediately on arrival there a number of the men were sent ashore to refill the water-casks and bring back sand and rock for ballast. Practically half the complement of every ship was ill with scurvy, and these were landed to recuperate. Of the *Revenge's* crew there were ninety invalided ashore, every man too sick to be of the slightest use on board. In another ship there were not enough men left to handle the mainsail! Those on board were hardly fit for duty. Such were the hardships of a long voyage in Tudor days.



Sir Richard Grenville

This, then, was the state of affairs in the English squadron when word was brought that the Spaniards were approaching from the other side of the island. Their approach being shrouded by the land, the enemy were

enabled to take the English by surprise, forcing the latter to weigh anchor and get out of the trap as speedily as possible. The enemy, it was learned, numbered fifty-three sail, and so were in overwhelming numbers against the English, whereupon the Admiral ordered all ships to put to sea at once. Some had not time to weigh and had to slip their cables, so close were the Spaniards.

Sir Richard Grenville was one of the last to depart, having stayed to pick up all his invalids ashore. The rest of the squadron, with Lord Thomas Howard, were able to recover the wind and bear away, but the *Revenge*, coming too late, found herself facing the enemy. Sir Richard's officers requested him to cast about and run while there was yet an opportunity, but he scorned the suggestion, saying he would rather die than dishonour himself and his country by turning from the foe. He then ordered the ship to be sailed toward the Spaniards' centre, his object being to pass between their galleons. So the little *Revenge* approached the Spanish fleet alone! To the windward lay the great galleon *San Philip*, a vessel of 1500 tons, and as the English ship drew near she fell in the lee of the towering sails of the *San Philip* and stood becalmed. Thus she answered neither to wind nor helm, but remained motionless, a target for the enemy fleet. At once the *San Philip* directed her broadside of three tiers of guns upon the *Revenge*, and the battle opened. Then came four other Spanish ships, two to port and two to starboard, to pour their concentrated fire into the hapless English vessel. She, however, was not idle, for her lower tier of guns discharged cross-bar shot into the tall *San Philip* to such good effect that the great galleon changed her position to one less exposed to the guns of the little gamecock.

When the fight had just begun, one of the English supply ships, the *George Noble* of London, drifting under the lee of the *Revenge*, her captain signalled to Sir Richard

offering what help he could give. Grenville, knowing the victualling ship to be of small force of arms, replied, bidding him to save himself and leave the *Revenge* to her fate. The exchange of fire doubled in intensity, the *Revenge* working havoc among the enemy, to their great amazement and discomfort. But it was she who suffered most. Round-shot smashed in her sides and cross-bar shot tore her hempen rigging to pieces, leaving her riddled, splintered masts and spars no longer supported, and soon to fall.

THE FIGHT

According to the Spanish custom, the galleons were crowded with soldiers, and, with this great company to employ, the Spaniards made attempts to board the *Revenge*, and to take her by hand-to-hand fighting on her own decks. Each attempt was repulsed by the English sailors. Two or more galleons were constantly at close quarters, throwing their grappling irons on to the English ship to board her, but so hot was the reception they received that after many hours of futile efforts the fifteen larger vessels that had attacked were glad to draw off to a safer range. But the process of wearing down the crew of the *Revenge* continued. Her decks were a shambles, her masts and spars gone overboard in a tangle of sails and gear, and her oaken sides pierced with jagged holes. All through the tropical night the English sailors sweated at the guns, the flashes of flame spurting from cannon and culverin telling how the game little ship still lived. Two of the great Spanish ships had

been sunk by her fire, and the rest were tiring of the fearful carnage. Sir Richard himself, like Nelson at a later date, refused to take advantage of shelter from the fire of the enemy, and was consequently wounded early in the action. Having this shot in the body dressed, he was soon on deck again, only to receive another musket-ball, this time in the head. But neither wound being immediately fatal, he continued to direct the fight until the end.

By morning the last powder-barrel of the *Revenge* was empty, and she, though still afloat, was a mastless derelict, her decks and sides smashed with gun-fire. The gilded upperworks, the rails, the quarter-galleries, capstans, tiller, and ladders were shot away, and, without masts, she lay a battered hulk now at the mercy of the enemy's guns. Forty of her crew were dead, and most of the others wounded. At the beginning of the fight she had ninety out of her hundred and ninety men lying below on the ballast, sick with fevers, and now the handful of able men left were without powder or shot to fire the guns. The end seemed near.

The Spaniards, on the other hand, had no dearth of ammunition, being kept supplied by other ships in their fleet, not only in this but in soldiers and gunners too. So, having still a reserve of strength, and seeing the *Revenge* had ceased firing and sensing the reason, they closed in, preparing to take the ship. Whereupon Sir Richard, deeming it dishonour to surrender, ordered his master-gunner (who was nothing loath, being of the same disposition as his captain) to split and sink the ship, and so prevent the Spaniards from capturing her. But some of the crew were for sending aboard the Spanish flagship to plead for terms, arguing, with good reason, that a live sailor was of more use to England than a dead one. They besought Sir Richard to think of his men, and offered to approach the Spanish Admiral at once for honourable terms. But Sir

Richard was not for surrendering, pointing out that his ship had held off the enemy fleet—fifteen thousand men and fifty-three ships—for fifteen hours, and that it would lessen the honour of their deeds were they to ask for a truce now. The deputation answered that the ship could not float much longer, being holed below water, and leaking so fast that she would sink in the first movement of the seas were an attempt made to get her away.

But while the indomitable Sir Richard was urging that they should blow up the ship and perish for England's honour, the majority, being against such an act, sent a party of truce aboard the flagship *General Don Alphonse Bassan*. To the eternal credit of the Spanish Admiral he accepted the surrender, giving the most liberal terms. Knowing with what a valorous man he had to deal, and having no desire to see further useless slaughter, he had unhesitatingly accepted the surrender without pressing his advantage.

When the reply was brought back to the *Revenge*, the men having the promise that their lives would be spared, those who had supported Sir Richard at first now withdrew their support, it being no difficult thing to persuade men to accept life in preference to death. But not so the master-gunner, for when he found that the majority had surrendered he took the matter so much as a dishonour that he would have slain himself had he not been forcibly restrained.

The Spanish Admiral sent many boats to the *Revenge* to take off the sick and injured, and in this way was the wounded Sir Richard Grenville, overwilled and protesting, taken aboard the galleon, where he was received with the deepest respect. When the Spaniards wished to remove him from the *Revenge*, the ship being unsavoury like a slaughter-house with blood and the bodies of dead men, Sir Richard protested that he desired not to have his body

saved, but they might do as they pleased with it, and as he was being lifted out of the ship he swooned. Presently recovering, he asked the company to pray for him, after which they took him aboard the galleon. The Admiral ordered his surgeons to use all their arts to restore his distinguished prisoner, for he felt it a great grief that so valorous a man should be lost to his country. And he expressed to the dying Grenville his great admiration for the prowess of himself and his men in setting a single ship against so many of the enemy. But all the care of the surgeons did no more than delay his passing, for Sir Richard died on board the galleon on the second or third day after the surrender.

The company of the *Revenge* were given their freedom and sent back to England, except those of higher rank, who had to pay what ransoms their estates would allow before being given their freedom.

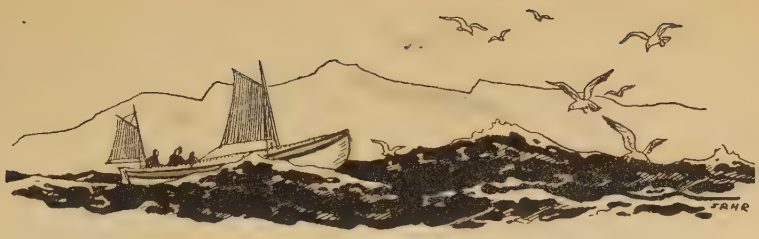
The memorable fight was over, the English captain, with many of his crew, was dead, and his ship lay beneath the waves, but he had left a record for valour that has never been surpassed. Two thousand of the enemy were lost, besides two large ships and some smaller ones, and for many years thereafter the Spaniards spoke the name of Sir Richard Grenville with awe, as they would speak of the supernatural.

THE "REVENGE"

PART III

REMARKABLE BOAT JOURNEYS

THE CASTAWAYS



CHAPTER VII

Shackleton's Journey: The Boats of the "Essex"

No records of the sea would be complete without some mention of the remarkable journeys made in small boats across hundreds and sometimes thousands of miles of ocean.

The days of heroism will never end, and records of heroic acts of to-day are just as abundant as those of a hundred years ago. Lieutenant Bligh's performance in safely piloting, in 1787, a boatload of castaways across twelve hundred leagues of ocean was a marvellous feat of courage and skill; but within the past ten years men of our own generation have shown themselves capable of similar deeds. The 1747-mile voyage of the two boats of the *Trevessa* is one of the modern epics of the sea; but while not so long in distance covered, Shackleton's journey across 800 miles of stormy waters in a small, worn-out boat in 1916, when both he and his companions were weakened by hardship, is perhaps the most stirring story of the sea that has ever been written. When Shackleton's ship, the *Endurance*, was crushed in the ice in the autumn of 1915 he and his officers and crew had to endure six months of the greatest hardship and peril before they escaped from the ice with their three boats and landed at a narrow beach on the mass of rock called Elephant Island. Here were twenty-eight men marooned on an island quite out of the track of any

possible search-parties. They had three small boats, one of which could never have lived through a gale. One of the party was a cripple with frostbitten feet, and the others were all more or less weak through privations. They could not have survived another winter; something had to be done quickly. The chances of outside relief were negligible. They had rations left for five weeks which might be spread over three months if supplemented by sea-elephant meat. But sea-elephants could not be depended on to come and save the lives of the marooned men. A boat journey in search of relief had to be made without delay. The nearest land was Port Stanley in the Falkland Islands, 540 miles distant; but to reach there they would have to beat against the north-westerly winds, an impossibility in such a frail and weakened craft. Shackleton therefore decided to make for the island of South Georgia, 800 miles away, where there was a Norwegian whaling-station. The hazards of such a journey were enormous, but it had to be tried. He decided to take with him five men and one month's provisions, for if they did not reach South Georgia within that time they never would reach it. After discussing the matter with the others Shackleton asked for volunteers, and he had no trouble in getting the men he wanted.[1] The 20-foot whaleboat was chosen, the carpenter patching it up with what materials he had at hand. Four sledge-runners and the lids of packing-cases were used to deck over the boat, a very necessary precaution against its being swamped by the heavy seas it would have to face. In the flimsy deck, which was covered with canvas, was an opening where those who happened to be navigating could stand. Two short masts were fitted to carry the two small sails necessary to accomplish the journey at all. For ballast a thousand pounds of sand sewed up in blankets

[1] The boat party were Shackleton, Worsley, Crean, McNeish, McCarthy, and Vincent.

were stowed in the bottom of the boat, in addition to which some round boulders were gathered and put on board. The food stores taken for six men for one month were nut food, biscuits, sugar, salt, canned milk, and beef cubes. They also had matches, paraffin, two Primus stoves, a sleeping-bag each, candles, and navigating instruments. There were also a few other things, among which were

water and ice. The ice was a convenient way of carrying part of their water supply, and there was no risk of its melting in those cold latitudes. When the little party were ready with their boat to set out on their do-or-die journey for help the seas were at first too rough to allow them to make a start, and all the men were confined to their tents by the blizzards. After waiting for their chance they got away on April 23, Shackleton leaving behind Frank Wild, his second in command, in charge of the Elephant Island party.

It is not difficult to imagine with what fears and hopes

the marooned men saw the boat-party sail away. Their lives depended on the skill, endurance, and courage of those in the boat. At that time of the year the ocean in those latitudes south of Cape Horn is the most stormy area of water on all the seven seas, and these men were undertaking to cross 800 miles of such tempestuous water in a frail, half-rotten boat, so small that it was in constant danger of being capsized, while they themselves were all, physically, the worse for wear. But let us go with them and try to visualize the perils and difficulties of this most critical journey.

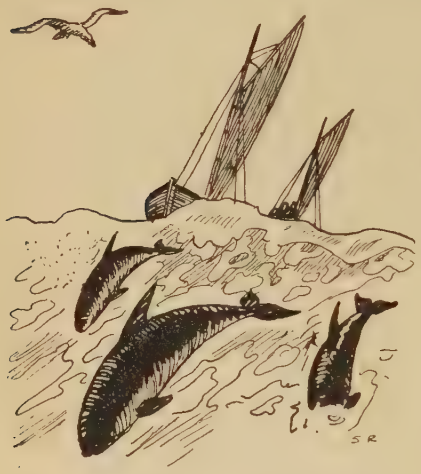
Getting away from the island through the ice-floes, Shackleton stood up with his arm around one of the small masts while he directed the steering, in order to prevent the boat from being crushed by the giant floes that tossed about on the heaving seas. By late afternoon they were clear of the pack, with open water before them. When they prepared their first hot meal it was found that three men were necessary to perform the business. One held the lamp, while two others took care of the aluminium cooking-pot by lifting it clear of the Primus stove when the movements of the boat threatened to capsize the 'kitchen' altogether. This operation had to be performed in a sitting or kneeling position beneath the deck covering, which was too low to permit of anyone standing upright under it. Those who were not sailing or steering kept out of the way by lying in their sodden sleeping-bags in the darkness under the deck-cover. One man would stay at the tiller for two hours and then crawl out of the way after another man had relieved him. Lying wet through in the bottom of the boat was acute misery, and this was aggravated by the boxes and bags of stores bruising the men's tired bodies when they tried to rest. They suffered greatly from being wet, the more so as they had no opportunity to move about and get warm in their cramped quarters.

The hammering of the seas gradually weakened the thin decking, so that the canvas covering sagged and held water, which poured into the boat itself, making constant baling necessary. To move along the boat they had to crawl under the thwarts[1] in the semi-darkness, and this required some care in order to preserve the trim of their craft. The reindeer-skin sleeping-bags shed their hair, owing to the constant wetting with sea-water, and, through wet and chafing, parts of the men's bodies were rubbed raw, these places being made worse by the action of the sea-water, which penetrated everywhere. But with all this discomfort the crew kept cheerful and contrived somehow, in spite of the never-ending gales, to get their meals regularly. The boulders, which were so useful as ballast, proved to be terribly bad bed-fellows as the men lay in their sleeping-bags in the tossing boat; but the ballast could not be dispensed with, so this extra torture had to be endured. And among all this discomfort Shackleton developed an acute bout of sciatica, the effect of being months adrift on an ice-floe. How humiliatingly the soul and the body are interdependent is demonstrated in times like this. A drink of hot milk or a pannikin of warm food, as Shackleton said, made optimists of them all. The meals were the bright spots in those drear and stormy days.

On the fourth day they had to heave to, which is one way of saying that the strong gale had increased to such force that it was unsafe to run before it. The boat's head was therefore put into the wind so that they could face the gale as the mountains of water rolled toward them. By putting out a sea-anchor, consisting of a canvas bag attached to the end of a painter fastened to the bows, they were able to keep her facing the oncoming seas. The boat caught the wind, and as she drifted to leeward the sea-anchor streaming out from the bows kept her facing in the right

[1] Seats.

direction. After lying hove to for two days the painter of the sea-anchor parted, and their boat fell off into the trough of the sea—a most perilous position to be in. In addition to this danger the deck of their craft was so weighed down with an accumulation of ice that she had lost her buoyancy and lay heavily on the water. They chipped off much of the ice, and, to lighten the craft further, threw overboard the spare oars —thickly encased in ice —and two frozen sleeping-bags. As a result they rode better, but the boat was still sluggish, and with the breaking of the painter the position was desperate. Not having another sea-anchor, there was but one thing left to do to bring the boat's head round to the wind, and this was setting a rag of sail, a risky experiment in such seas. However, the effort succeeded, and by the following day, the seventh since leaving Elephant Island, they were able to resume their course for South Georgia. With a bright sun that morning Worsley, Shackleton's best navigator, was able to get a sight and find their position, this being the first observation they had been able to make in seven days.



Here Shackleton tells of the porpoises that came blowing round the boat, and of the Cape pigeons that swooped within a few feet of them, and of the grey albatrosses that watched "with hard bright eyes" the men's struggle to keep their craft afloat in the heavy seas. This day the sun gave them a little warmth, and their spirits rose accordingly.

After Worsley had worked out the position he found they had covered 380 miles, and were thus nearly half-way to their destination, and when this cheering bit of news was passed round they began to think that they might get through after all.

During the next three days the "wind blew hard," and unceasing care had to be exercised in navigating the boat to keep her from broaching to and getting capsized. At this stage it became necessary to prepare hot milk once during the night for all hands to keep them alive till dawn, a fact that discloses their physical condition. On the tenth day Worsley became so cramped that he could not straighten his body after his spell of duty, and had to be dragged under the decking and massaged before he could be got into his sleeping-bag. On the eleventh day another gale sprang up with accompanying snow-squalls, and a terrible cross-sea came to torment the harassed voyagers. During that night they came as near to foundering as at any time during the passage, when an enormous wave tossed the boat up like a cork and involved them in a chaos of breaking, heaving water. In the darkness they held on for dear life, but the boat lived through the experience, though it was actually half-full of water. By desperate baling the craft once again lifted to the waves, and this nightmare was over. And now in the darkness, with stores, bedding, clothes, and everything soaking wet, they struggled to dry the stove and

get some liquid heated. This they succeeded in doing at three in the morning, when every one was almost *in extremis*. To add to their discomforts, toward the end of the journey they suffered from thirst, as the water supply was so far gone that only the most meagre ration was given out daily. About ten in the morning of May 8 they passed a bit of floating kelp, a sign that land was not far away, and an hour later saw two of those sea-birds called shags sitting on a mass of kelp. Just after midday, through a break in the clouds a glimpse was caught of the black rocks of South Georgia. They had been at sea fourteen days; but as it turned out two more days were to elapse before they were able to make a landing. By this time the tortures of thirst filled their lives with a physical misery that can hardly be exaggerated. Yet Shackleton remained firm in his refusal to increase the liquid ration, as his experience as a navigator warned him that they might have to beat off the coast for days before they could make a safe landing. To a landsman it would seem that once the land was sighted their difficulties were behind them; but it could almost be said the greatest peril was still before them—the peril of safely beaching in heavy seas on a lee shore marked with dangerous rocks, and in a leaky, rotten boat. They stood in toward the shore looking for a landing-place; but ahead of them were big rollers sweeping over hidden reefs and breaking on to jutting black rocks, while the coast itself appeared to offer no landing-place, the forbidding cliffs descending sheer into the sea without a sign of a beach. The position was desperate. To attempt a landing here would have meant disaster; every man would have been drowned, and on their safety depended the safety of the twenty-two men on Elephant Island. So, as night approached, they sailed away from the land and lay hove to in a safe offing—that is, far enough from the coast to keep from being blown on to the rocks during the night.

With the coming of the new day the chance of finding a landing-place was counted on by all hands; but Fate had not yet done with the unhappy men, for at five in the morning the wind increased to the worst hurricane any of them had ever experienced. The wind and sea were driving them ashore, and their position was more desperate than ever. The danger was so great that even their raging thirst was forgotten in the struggle to keep the boat afloat. All that day they fought, and succeeded in keeping away from the dreaded breakers and fangs of rock; but as another night approached every one felt the end was near. Then, just when there seemed no more hope, the wind changed. At six o'clock in the evening, after dark, they were able once more to get away from the very jaws of destruction. As a sailor would say, they were able to claw off the land and make an offing. Just as the wind dropped the pin that held the mast to the thwart fell out, a seemingly small thing; but if that had happened a little earlier nothing could have saved them. On the slender stick of a mast their lives depended, and it held out till the force of the gale was over. A miracle indeed! Now, with a sort of respite from that peril, the pangs of thirst returned; their water was gone, and a landing must be made the next day or it would be too late. On May 10 they woke (if any man had slept at all) to find the wind almost gone; but a heavy cross-sea was running. In the shore line they could see an indentation that it was decided to run for. They ran therefore toward the reef, and after further perils that we must pass over they sailed, at dusk, through a narrow entrance of the reef and a little later felt the boat's keel scrape on the beach.

The story of the boat journey is virtually over. They were too weak to drag it ashore, and all they could do was to make fast the painter to a rock till morning. The gurgling sound of running water guided them to a glacial

stream, where, on their knees, they drank deep of the elixir that put new life into them. The rest of the tale concerns a land journey that was, if possible, even more remarkable and perilous than the sea passage; but as this is a sea-story we must pass quickly over the rest. It is enough to say that, in view of the physical state of two of the party and of the weakened condition of the boat, they could not sail round the island to Stromness, the whaling-station, 150 miles away, where relief could be found, so an overland journey was necessary.

The interior of the island is an unexplored wilderness of snow-capped mountains; and before an attempt could be made to cross them a few days' rest was imperative. At 2 A.M. on Friday morning, May 19, Shackleton, Worsley, and Crean started on their attempt to cross, without proper clothing or equipment, what have always been regarded as inaccessible mountains. Too weak to pull a sledge, they travelled 'light,' without sleeping-bags and with food for three days stuffed into three socks. The other men were left in camp on the beach, as two of them were too ill to travel and one man had to stay behind to look after the invalids. The crossing of the mountains is a story full of perils and difficulties overcome. Expert Alpine climbers have given their opinion that this land journey ranks among the finest mountaineering feats ever attempted. On the afternoon of the second day after they had left their companions the three weary men entered the wooden building of the whaling-station, and their leader, walking up to the manager of the station, said simply, "My name is Shackleton."

Here the tale ends. Those left on the other side of the island were picked up the next day, and the marooned men in the Antarctic were rescued after four attempts had been made to get through the ice to them. Some day Shackleton's first words on reaching civilization will become as much

a part of history as Stanley's historic "Doctor Livingstone, I presume."

On November 20, 1819, the American whaler *Essex*[1] was in the South Pacific, rolling in a gentle sea under shortened sail while three of her boats were employed in chasing whales. The mate's boat had come up with a big cachalot and made fast to it; but it was so badly damaged by the animal's thrashing flukes that the line had to be cut, and the boat returned to the ship for repairs. While the carpenter was on the deck amidships repairing the damaged whaleboat, the mate and harpooners watched the chase of the other two boats in charge of the captain and the second mate. Each boat was fast to a whale, and provided a lively entertainment to the watchers on board the *Essex*. Suddenly another whale came to the surface near the ship, and Owen Chase, the mate, began to curse his luck that, with such a prize within easy reach, his boat was out of the combat. Then in a moment his cursing was changed to a cry of alarm, followed by the order, given in a thundering voice, "Hard up your helm!"

Before the ship could answer to her rudder she received a shock as if she had struck a hidden reef. The masts shook, the gear rattled, and the pans clattered down in the galley. "The whale!" shouted the men. "He's coming for us again." The helmsman spun the wheel, but the ship did not answer to it. She was already settling by the head, the whale having burst in the planking below the fore-rigging. After the first charge the maddened animal had dived under the ship, and on reappearing had turned to renew the attack. The whale came on and hit the ship near the lee bow with such force as to crush in its plankings as one would crush an eggshell. The animal

[1] Her commander, Captain Pollard, had been one of the crew of Fulton's *Clermont*, the first steamboat built in America.

now disappeared, whether fatally injured or not was never known, the men being too occupied with thoughts of their immediate peril to think of aught else. The spare whaleboat was launched, and, taking what few instruments and provisions they could quickly gather, they tumbled into it.

The captain, noticing something wrong, had cut loose

from his whale and returned to the ship, closely followed by the second mate's boat. The *Essex* being still afloat, the captain took some men on board and had the masts cut away. With this the ship recovered from the big list she had on, and the boats stood by all night while more provisions were brought out of the cuddy and passed over the side, until they had altogether 600 lb. of bread, 200 gallons of water, a little meat, and some tools and powder. By morning it was seen that the *Essex* could not float much longer, and the whalemen discussed the destination for which they should make. The Marquesas were the nearest islands in those lonely seas, but as the natives had been so badly treated by sailors that it was unsafe to go there it was

decided to try to reach the mainland of South America. There was a thousand-mile sail before them, but old whalemen were accustomed to being at sea in small boats, and the prospect of the thousand-mile journey was not so alarming as the thought of the days of starvation in store. Two of the boats each carried seven men, while the other carried but six, being weak and unseaworthy, and for the next *thirty days* the whalemen toiled across the dreary expanse of sea, enduring all the hardships that fall to the lot of castaways short of food and water. Dolphins gambolled in the seas close to the boats, but as there were no harpoons on board there was no way of catching them to provide food. Some days they had a little luck—a rain squall would come along and give every one a chance to drink his fill; and once or twice flying-fish fell on board, to be instantly pounced upon by the hungry whalemen. In all three boats it was found impossible to keep the bread dry, and it quickly became saturated with salt water.

So a month went by and every one had despaired of ever seeing land again, when one morning a shout went up from one of the boats, "Land ho!" Soon all saw for themselves the pale outlines of an island just above the rim of the horizon. Their landfall proved to be Ducies Island, a

barren place, treeless and uninhabited—a desolate spot to welcome castaways who had been a month at sea. The ragged men dragged their cramped bodies ashore and there rested a week. They spent the time catching a few birds, some fish, and some crabs, but not in sufficient quantities to satisfy their hunger, for we read of their eating pepper grass while on the island. A cave was found near the beach containing eight human skeletons, and near them lay a board in which were cut the words, *Ship, Elizabeth, London*, grim souvenirs of some bygone tragedy.

On December 27 the castaways set sail again, leaving behind them three men who preferred the known hazards of life on this lonely shore to the unknown hazards of another boat journey. The boats had been at sea a fortnight after leaving the island when the mate's boat became separated from the other two. Nearly a month after this separation one of the men in this boat died, and on the mate's advice part of the body was cut up and eaten, the flesh lasting for seven days! On February 18 the English brig *Indian*, of London, was sighted, and the men were picked up and taken to Valparaiso.

When the mate's boat had been lost sight of, on January 12, the other two had kept company for a few days

longer, when the second mate's boat disappeared and was never again heard of. In Captain Pollard's boat affairs, meanwhile, went very badly. The provisions were exhausted, and on February 1, when the men were almost *in extremis* with hunger, they decided, by mutual consent, to draw lots to see who should be sacrificed to feed the others, and this was actually done. On February 11, when there were only two men left alive, they were sighted by the whaler *Dauphin* and picked up. As for the men on Ducies Island, they were rescued by a British ship just in time to save their lives.

CHAPTER VIII

The "Bounty" Castaways: The "Trevessa's" Boats: "The Earl of Eldon"

In a previous chapter the story of the mutiny on board H.M.S. *Bounty* has been told, and the account ended, so far as the castaways were concerned, at the point where Captain Bligh was thrust into the waiting boat, already deeply laden to the gunwales with the burden of eighteen men. The painter was cast off while the mutineers stood on the poop jeering at the wretched position of their recent shipmates, and as they drifted astern some on board the *Bounty* were heard to shout, "Huzza for Otaheite!" But Bligh felt sure that that was merely a blind to mislead him.

The mutiny had come about so suddenly that the castaways hardly yet realized the seriousness of their position. Captain Bligh, in his subsequent report to the Admiralty, wrote: "A few hours before my situation had been peculiarly flattering. I had a ship in the most perfect order, and well stored with every necessity both for service and for health." He asked what the reason was for such a revolt. Did the mutineers expect a happier life in the South Seas among the Otaheitans than in England?

Whatever the reason was, it did not much matter now. Bligh, as leader, had to consider what was best to be done. The morning was fine, the sea was calm, so he decided to make for the island of Tofoa, which he guessed to be but a few hours' sail from where they were, and obtain a supply of breadfruit to augment their meagre stock of food. There were thousands of miles of water between them and the nearest civilized settlement, the Dutch colony of Timor; and the 150 lb. of bread and 32 lb. of pork would make scanty rations divided between nineteen people for a month or more. For drinking they had 28 gallons of water, six quarts of rum, and six bottles of wine, a quantity that would necessitate the meanest allowance per day for each man.

After an all-day sail in gentle winds the launch arrived off the island of Tofoa at dark. The shore was found to be very steep and rocky, and as there was no anchorage it was decided to keep the boat under the lee of the island with two oars until daylight. The next morning, after sailing along the coast, a landing was found in a stony cove, the grapnel was dropped just beyond the breakers, and some of the men waded ashore and climbed the low cliffs to go in search of water and breadfruit. A small quantity of water was brought back, but no breadfruit. Farther along the coast, the next day, some coconut-trees were seen on a cliff, and twenty nuts were found, which were distributed, one nut to each man. For some days the weather had been bad, the seas running much too high to be safe for such an overloaded boat, so, after one attempt to set sail, Bligh landed again and sent out parties in further search of food. The cliffs were climbed by the aid of hanging vines, and once at the top the men walked far inland but found little fruit—a few bunches of plantains at the most.

At the head of the cove was a cave, 150 yards from the

shore, which was at once taken possession of as a temporary shelter. At night half the party slept in the cave, while the other half slept in the boat as a measure of precaution in case there were any prowling natives about. To lose the boat would be the worst of calamities in their present situation.

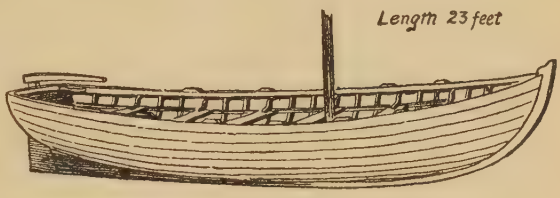
On shore the plantains were boiled, each man having his share. Out of that and a quarter of a pint of grog they had to make a supper before turning in for a night's fitful sleep. Watches were set, but those on guard heard no sound beyond the breeze in the palm-trees and the low, unceasing roar of the surf. At dawn on the fourth day a party started out to explore the island, and returned later with two natives, who brought coconut-shells filled with water, which were thankfully accepted by the white men. Presently other natives appeared. By noon there were thirty of them, all appearing friendly. On Saturday, May 2, the weather was still so bad that Bligh was reluctantly compelled to stay ashore another day. Meanwhile the natives were getting inquisitive, demanding to know where the ship was. Bligh decided that it would not do to tell them the truth, so he explained that the ship was lost and the white men were castaways.

The natives seemed to be very poor, with little food to spare, though a certain amount of trading was done between them and the sailors, the former exchanging fruit for trinkets. At sunset all the natives left, but the next morning they returned in increased numbers, with them coming two chiefs. The savages were showing signs of hostility, and had to be forcibly prevented from hauling the boat up on to the beach; but after being threatened with a cutlass they desisted.

It is strange to read in Bligh's report that, in spite of the natives' hostility, they sold the white men a few spears at the latter's request, Bligh hoping thus to arm his men against the attack that appeared certain.

It was decided to leave at sunset if possible, and the plan of action was carefully discussed. Meanwhile the natives lining the beach were knocking stones together, a sign which Bligh knew to be the prelude to an attack. In the afternoon the men, as unostentatiously as possible, began to get their things together and put them into the boat. This action was watched by the natives with obvious signs of disfavour, but they did not interfere. Many groups had built fires on the beach, showing that they intended staying the night.

At sunset the master and some of the men stood in the boat keeping it off the beach, when the party ashore boldly took up the remainder of the stores and gear and carried it down to the water's edge. The two chiefs then requested Bligh to stay the night, but his only answer was to take the hand of one of them and lead him down to the boat. The onset of the natives was growing rapidly more imminent, and Bligh's object was to have the chief near him as a hostage; but the latter broke loose from the handgrip and went back up the beach.

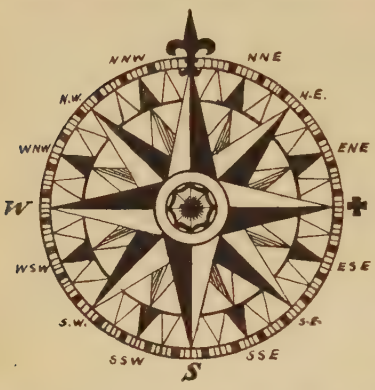


THE "BOUNTY'S" LAUNCH

All this time the ominous beating together of stones continued. Bligh got into the boat and ordered the men to push off. One of the boat's men, John Norton, quartermaster, stepped into the surf to cast off the stern rope, and as he did so Bligh called him back. But it was too late. The natives knocked him down and beat him to death, while those in the boat were the target of a fusillade of stones. Two hundred natives ran down the beach, some throwing stones, others endeavouring to restrain the boat

from leaving. The painter was grasped by dusky hands, but Bligh instantly cut the rope and freed the boat. Amid a bombardment of stones the crew pushed off and began to row as they never rowed before. Having nothing to protect themselves with, everyone was hurt by the stone-throwing, which was extremely accurate.

The danger was not yet over, for immediately the boat was in deeper water the natives filled canoes with stones, and twelve men paddled rapidly after the launch. Going much faster than the white men could row, they soon overtook them and proceeded to throw their stones with a deadly aim. They paddled round the launch, and the men had to suffer the attack without being able to retaliate, except with such few stones as fell in their boat. Darkness was approaching, and if they could but hold out a little longer they could get safely away. Then the idea of delaying the pursuit and attack of the natives by throwing clothes overboard was thought of, and, the attackers stopping to pick up the clothes, the white men were enabled to escape under cover of the night, which had now spread over the sea.



The men now requested that they should steer for the nearest civilized settlement, and agreed to live on stringent food rations as long as was necessary. Bligh then chose to make for Timor, the Dutch settlement 1200 leagues away, and at once put every man on rations of one ounce of bread and a quarter of a pint of water a day, which would enable them to carry on for eight weeks. As they were running before a heavy sea the bread, which was in

bags and getting wet, was transferred to the carpenter's tool-chest, where it could be protected both from wet and from theft. Later a pair of scales was made out of two half-shells of coconuts, and the food was weighed out with a pistol ball, weighing a twenty-fifth of a pound.

Every one spent a wretched night. The sea was running high, but they dared not land on any of the islands for fear of the natives. As the gale increased the men got soaking wet with the spray, which would have quickly filled the boat had not every available tin and bucket been used for baling. The launch sat dangerously low in the water, the least tilt causing water to slop over the gunwale. With the greatest reluctance Bligh ordered some extra clothing, sails, and rope to be jettisoned to lighten the boat. During the night a teaspoonful of rum was served to all hands, and its stimulating effect tided many of the men over the worst hours of despair.

With the coming of daylight a quarter of a pint of coconut milk was given out with the meat, a diet that was to serve for each meal until the supply of coconuts had gone.

A log line was made out of twine, and thereafter the day's run was more or less accurately kept as long as they were at sea. The log became much frayed and knotted with constant use, but worked well enough and showed runs of from 90 to 130 miles in twenty-four hours. On May 6 at daybreak islands were seen in the distance standing out as low, dark shapes on the horizon; but, Captain Bligh deeming it too risky to land, they gradually dropped behind, though many a pair of eyes gazed wistfully at the distant palms. On this day they suffered a great disappointment — great enough to starving men. After experiments with angling, by trawling a line out astern, a fish was caught and hauled to the boat. Then, as it was lifted out of the water, it wriggled off the hook and was lost. No more fish were caught that day, nor for

many days after, so the men had to make the best of their ration of soggy bread, damaged by sea-water. Every one was suffering the common complaints of castaways in a boat—cramped limbs and swollen feet. Coming so early in the journey, they presaged worse trouble ahead; but Bligh kept the men's minds off their wretchedness by painting rosy pictures of the pleasant country of Timor, whither they were bound. Also, with commendable prudence, he described the lie of the islands through which they expected to navigate, so that in case anything should happen to him the next in command would be the better able to bring the men safely to civilization.

On May 7 land was again sighted, and the launch was cautiously sailed closer to examine it. When near the shore two large sailing-canoes were seen to be coming swiftly toward them. The *Bounty's* men were far too weak and defenceless to protect themselves from a concerted attack. Aiding their sail by what power they could muster to the oars, they ignominiously put out to sea again. For a while the canoes gained upon them, but after an hour or so gave up the chase and returned to the beach. This land was thought to be "Feejee," as Bligh spelled it in his log.

The heavy rain that fell on them at this time was a mixed blessing. It soaked every one through, but it increased the stock of water and gave each man his fill for the time being. But they were never entirely free from troubles. If the sun shone down on them and dried their clothes it also parched their throats and drove them nearly mad with thirst. If the skies were overcast with rain-clouds their thirst was forgotten, but their emaciated bodies shivered with the ague of cold. To better their condition somewhat, the carpenter raised the quarters of the boat by nailing on boards from the stern sheets, while forward a weather-cloth was spread from the mast to the shrouds. This deflected a great deal of the head spray, and sheltered the men a

little from the cold winds at night. In spite of energetic efforts to keep water out, the boat was only kept afloat by constant baling, for it leaked from below and shipped water from above.

On May 14 an island was seen, and the next day more islands. The situation can be compared to that of Tan-

talus. The men were suffering from thirst again, and they were never free from the pangs of hunger. On the islands was food, and around them was water; yet they dared not approach the land in search of food, and could not drink the water.

They began to beg for more food; but the commander refused it. Bligh was no doubt a martinet, but he was a fine seaman, and had he been a weaker man the boat's crew would probably never have pulled through the experience. Every one was suffering violent pains, and

some appeared to be on the point of death. But Bligh kept his place in the stern sheets and never weakened from his resolve to keep a direct course for Timor. In his report he expressed surprise that no one was so far laid up. The small rum allowance was of great service in preserving the spark of life during the worst nights, when the men's vitality was at its lowest. On cloudy days it was discovered that the body could be made comparatively warm by stripping off one's clothes and wringing them in salt water. On the other hand, rain-soaked clothes made their wearers feel the cold intensely.

On May 18 many birds were seen—a sign of land not far away. The men asked for a larger allowance of rum, but the leader refused, declaring that he feared they must suffer much more yet before they reached safety.

At dawn on May 20 some of the men lay in the bottom of the boat as if they were dead; but a little rum and the meagre breakfast ration of a twenty-fifth of a pound of bread revived them. Of the next day Bligh wrote: "Our distresses were now very great, and we were so covered with rain and salt water that we could scarcely see." For days they had had constant stormy weather, and Bligh began to fear that every one would die, when providentially the sun shone again and the perilous time was over for the present.

On May 25 the leader decided to reduce the bread ration by leaving out one 'meal' a day, and, after using considerable persuasion, he got the men to agree to the sacrifice. They would now get two twenty-fifths of a pound of bread a day, which would allow the bread to last forty-three days more. The day after the reduction in rations a 'booby' (a bird about the size of a duck) was caught by hand. These birds will alight in the rigging of a vessel, and their name is said to originate from the fact that they are easy to catch alive. Next day another booby

was caught, which was at once divided between the nineteen men—a mere mouthful apiece. Trees and pieces of driftwood were now floating by, and when two more boobies were caught hope revived in all hearts. They were nearing the northernmost point of Australia, then known as New Holland, and one night they nearly came to unexpected grief in some breakers a quarter of a mile ahead.

On May 29 they found islands all round them, and after

safely steering through some dangerous reefs the launch passed into smooth water and was anchored just off a sandy beach. No natives were seen, and Bligh decided to land and search for food. The rocks were covered with a few oysters, which were quickly gathered. As there was still no sign of natives the night was spent on the island, some sleeping ashore while others slept in the boat. The next day, with revived spirits, the weakened men explored the jungle at the back of the shore in search of fruit, but without success. Though their outlook was brighter, every one was ill and so weak that the smallest physical effort was made with difficulty. Bligh here, for the first time, managed to get a fire going on the beach with the aid of brimstone, tinder, and a small magnifying glass he carried

in his pocket for reading off the scale on his quadrant. The surgeon cautioned the men against eating unknown berries or fruit; but, like wayward children, many ignored the warning and had to pay for their indiscretion by sickness, which, however, did not do much harm to anyone. It was a great hardship that they had no fire-arms with which to defend themselves against possible attacks from natives and also to secure game for food.

After two days on the beach every empty vessel in the boat was filled with water, and the men embarked to continue the voyage to Timor. When they were pushing off, twenty natives appeared on the opposite side of the cove, waving spears and making signs to the white men to approach. Prudence dictated otherwise, and they steered for the opening among the reefs and so into the open sea, where they were comparatively safe. On June 1 more islands were seen at close enough range to observe the natives running along the shores. The following morning a landing was made on a deserted beach in order that a search for food might be made. Thus hunger drives men, just as it does animals, to face dangers they might otherwise avoid. Two parties were told off to go ashore, but one seaman, in a rebellious mood, refused to go, and announced to Bligh that he was just as good a man as the commander. Whereupon Bligh grasped a cutlass and giving the man a weapon, bid him defend himself for his life. At such a show of resolution the malcontent dropped his cutlass to plead for pardon, and there was no further trouble.

The story of the longest voyage of castaways on record is drawing near its end. Bligh, with his officers and men, landed on other islands in the course of the next few days. Everywhere they gathered a few oysters or a little fruit, but never enough to satisfy their craving for food. On one island an incident occurred that is not without its humour. The men were strictly ordered not to make too

large a fire for fear of attracting natives, yet one of them carelessly set alight some dry grass, which spread into a conflagration that at night must have been seen for fifty miles!

There was nineteen days' food left, and it was clear that succour must come soon if the lives of Mr Ledward, the surgeon, and a seaman were to be saved, as they were breaking up fast. The only medicine they could get was

a spoonful of wine. The best medicine of all, food and rest, was impossible.

On June 12, at three o'clock in the morning, they reached their destination. Bligh writes: "With an excess of joy we discovered Timor." Two days later they went ashore, and were escorted by friendly natives to the residence of the Dutch Governor, who treated them with great kindness and helped them to return to England on the first vessel available.

The story of the journey of the officers and crew in the boats of the s.s. *Trevessa* across the Indian Ocean, in 1923, is a fair answer to those who say that the race is decadent and men are not what they used to be.

The *Trevessa*, a single-screw steamer of 3121 tons, built in Germany and taken over by Britain after the War, arrived at Port Pirie, New South Wales, on April 29, to take on a cargo of zinc concentrates for Antwerp, *via* Freemantle and Durban. Zinc concentrates is a heavy ore-dust of the density of half-set cement, and stows easily in a ship's holds. The *Trevessa*, after loading her heavy cargo, left Port Pirie on May 15 and met heavy weather the first day out. The wind blew a gale, and some of the crew, being superstitious, found many reasons why the ship would not reach port. They had had bad luck with cats. Two cats, one of them black, had deserted the ship, the black one immediately before the beginning of the voyage, and the other, a tabby, had died later. A curse was on the ship, it seemed.

The gale blew itself out, however, and the *Trevessa* arrived safely at Freemantle on May 24, where she took on nearly four hundred tons of coal. The next day she sailed for Durban. The weather was fine at first, though toward evening the wind freshened, and by the following morning it was blowing a full gale. The decks forward and aft were constantly under water, as gradually the seas grew worse. The *Trevessa* behaved well, but Captain Foster decided to slow down the engines a little to ease the ship. On June 3 a huge sea broke on board amidships, tearing two lifeboats adrift from their chocks and smashing in the door of the mate's cabin, besides doing a considerable amount of other damage. Matters grew worse; the ship was not lifting to the seas as she should and the captain decided to heave to. From this time on events happened in rapid succession. At midnight the men reported that they had heard water swishing about in the hold forward. Twenty minutes later the pumps were started, but the water gained so rapidly in the forepeak that they had little effect, as the *Trevessa* was down by the

head. The ship was sinking rapidly, and the seas were constantly breaking over her. She was then turned to run before the gale, this manœuvre taking some of the strain off the forward bulkheads, which by now were bulging under the pressure of water. At twenty minutes past two in the morning the order was given to abandon the engine-room, and the engineers and stokehold crew came up on deck, where they would have a fighting chance of life when the ship went down. The scene that confronted the grimy, sweating men was in direct contrast to the Turkish-bath-like quarters that they had just left. Below, in the perpetual artificial light of electric lamps, there was neither wind nor rain nor sea, and the temperature was that of an oven. Now they stood on the wet upper deck in the howling gale with the unpleasant prospect of having to quit the warm ship to trust themselves in a small boat. The mountainous seas, illuminated by the ship's lights, stood out like hills of white foam against the dense blackness of the night—a prospect to test the courage of the strongest. But perfect discipline was kept from first to last. Each man knew his duty and did it.

At one in the morning Captain Foster, realizing that there was no hope of saving the ship, ordered the two undamaged boats to be swung out and provisioned. Six cases of condensed milk, two tins of biscuits, cartons of cigarettes and tobacco, the compass, chart, and sextants, the ship's papers, and the men's discharge books were put into the boats. The amount of food stores was insufficient

for a prolonged period at sea, but there was no time to get more. The ship might make her last plunge at any moment.

The *Trevessa* was 1640 miles from Freemantle, and to the last minute the wireless operator stuck to his key, sending out the grim signal S.O.S. At 2.15 A.M., when the ship was abandoned, her fore-deck was awash. She

was going down by the head. Before leaving his room the wireless operator had the satisfaction of hearing the S.O.S. answered by three steamers. The boats were got into the water with great difficulty, owing to the heavy seas, the winds being 7 to 9 on the Beaufort scale, which is equivalent to between 40 and 50 miles an hour. The last act of the engineer was to put the engines astern to stop the ship while the boats were got over. No. 1 boat (the captain's) struck the side of the ship when being launched, and cracked one plank below the water-line; but the carpenter was able to repair this damage later. Into the captain's boat were put a black cat and four kittens; but the mother jumped back on board as the boat pushed

off, so, as the kittens could not live without her, they had to be drowned.

After the boats were launched and the men had taken their places they were rowed away from the sinking ship to a safe distance, where they remained standing by. At 2.45 A.M. the *Trevessa* foundered, standing up on end as she went down, with all lights burning. As she disappeared some of those in the boats murmured, " She's gone!"

With the sinking of the ship the terrible feeling of utter loneliness was quickly dispelled by the need for every man to concentrate his mind on keeping the boats afloat. All that day they rode to sea-anchors, waiting in the vicinity for the possible arrival of one of the vessels that had picked up the S.O.S. call, but at 5 P.M. it was decided to wait no longer. They were in the middle of the Indian Ocean, almost equidistant from land in any direction, and they could not afford to wait long in this spot with the small stock of provisions they had between them. The first officer, Mr Smith, had charge of the other boat. At the beginning the two boat-parties sailed in company, but on June 9 it was decided to separate, as they hampered each other, the captain's boat being the faster. Also, by dividing forces they stood a better chance of sighting a ship. In the captain's boat were twenty men, in the mate's twenty-four. Both boats were clincher-built of wood, 26 feet long with a beam of 8 feet 3 inches; and each was provided with a 17-foot mast with a lugsail. They were the typical

ship's lifeboat as carried on most modern steamers. The equipment, besides mast and sail, was eight ash oars, one steering oar, boathook, rudder, tiller, sea-anchor, baler, two buckets, two hatchets, and a lamp. There were also two cans of oil, one oil-bag, a spirit compass, ropes, red lights, a watertight tin of matches, and the regulation tin of biscuits and breaker of water.

When they left the spot where the *Trevessa* went down a decision had to be made as to the course the boats should take. They were 1728 miles from Mauritius and 1600 miles from Freemantle. Though the latter place was the nearer, to get there would mean sailing into stormy latitudes with contrary winds, whereas on the longer passage they would be daily getting into better weather. So the longer route was chosen.

In the haste to leave the ship no chronometer was taken into the captain's boat, with the result that steering had to be done by the sun, moon, and stars, the spirit-compass not working accurately owing to the jerky motion of the boat. Captain Foster first had the two water-breakers and the five tins of biscuit and milk passed aft, where he could have them under his eye. The officers and engineers sat aft, the coloured firemen in the centre, and the carpenter and sailors forward. The men were immediately put on rations, the allowance of liquid being three tablespoonfuls of water with four teaspoonfuls of milk a day. On June 6 the captain had the two axes, a meat-chopper, and a large knife sent aft. On June 7 some of the men stripped to the waist and washed in sea-water in an attempt to allay their thirst. Two days later a heavy rain came and satisfied, for the time being, the universal craving for water. It was on this day that the mate's and the captain's boats agreed to run for the land separately. No. 1 boat was slightly faster, having a larger sail.

The men soon began to experience stiffness through

being forced to sit constantly in a cramped position. The nights, too, added to their woes, for after sundown the air grew bitterly cold. As the days went by the torments of thirst began to monopolize their thoughts, and various experiments were tried to obtain relief. Drawing sea-water into the nostrils and blowing it out again was one method of allaying thirst; another was to swill the body with sea-water, as we have already seen. The water ration was measured out in the round, shallow lids from cigarette tins, each man being given one to keep for himself and guard carefully, as these tin lids were the only receptacles they had out of which to eat or drink. An occasional rain-squall would bring fresh water, and many were the methods of obtaining a little of the precious fluid. The best method of all—catching a quantity of rain-water by using the sail—was, unfortunately, impracticable. The canvas was so saturated with salt from constant drenching from the spray that the rain-water caught in this way was made almost as salt as the sea itself.

MODERN SHIP'S LIFEBOAT

The progress of the boat toward the land was eagerly followed by the men, and the captain soon discovered that when he announced the run after every midday observation the news invariably had a heartening effect on the crew. Sail-power was the only method of progress, the men being far too weak to use the 14-foot oars to any advantage, except when it became necessary to keep the boats' heads on to a heavy sea. As with most castaways in small boats, there were occasions when it became necessary to trust their lives to a sea-anchor, and more than once the age-old trick of pouring oil on the waters was resorted to. There are different methods of doing this, but Captain Foster found

that the most satisfactory, when running, was to fasten two tins of oil to the gunwales on the quarters—*i.e.*, toward the stern end of the boat—and allow the oil to drip slowly from small holes punched in the tins. The oil worked with entire success. Every wave as it broke toward the boat, instead of coming boiling past, would slide meekly under the oil lying on the surface. The most steep and dangerous seas were rendered comparatively harmless by this device, but, as there was only a very small quantity aboard, it was only resorted to when the boat was in considerable danger.

By this time every one was suffering from lack of food and from exposure. When the men slept they had to lie on lifebelts spread out underneath the thwarts, as there was always a quantity of water in the bottom of the boat. The physical troubles were mainly swollen feet, headaches, cramp, and general weakness. The men rubbed their feet with oil to restore the circulation. Exercise of any sort was almost impossible, for even to stand up in the boat was dangerous.

On June 20, after they had been at sea sixteen days, Jacob Ali, an Indian, died, and two days later Mussim Nagi, an Arab, died. Every one was growing weaker, and thirst continued to be their worst trouble. So dry were their mouths that after chewing a biscuit for a while it could be blown out like dust. Those who took turns at steering suffered from headaches through constantly looking in the direction of the sun.

Captain Foster, like Columbus, offered a reward to the first man who sighted land. But whereas the Genoese admiral offered a fine doublet, all Captain Foster could offer was a tinful of water. But we feel pretty certain that, when at a quarter to three on the afternoon of June 26 the carpenter sighted land, he would not have exchanged his tinful of brackish water for the finest doublet ever made.

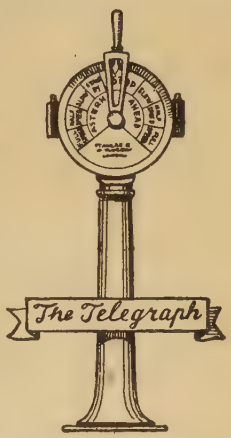
The end of the journey was at last in sight, for they had better luck than did Shackleton when he and his men sighted South Georgia. Instead of having to beat off the land for days, they were fortunate enough to be able to get ashore that same night. Coasting along the north end of the island (which proved to be Rodriguez, 344 miles east of Mauritius), they saw a light on shore, and by eight o'clock they were alongside a small landing-stage, and were being quickly helped ashore into the Eastern Telegraph Company's station, where the resident doctor did what he could for them. At first they could not walk, but all rapidly recovered under the care of the people at Rodriguez, and in a short time were on their way back to England, travelling comfortably as passengers on a steamer. The boat's crew had landed exactly where Captain Foster had planned they should, after a journey of 1556 miles, lasting just short of twenty-three days. When they reached Rodriguez they had one week's supply of biscuit and half a breaker of water left; just that pathetic trifle between life and death, for ships could not be counted on in those lonely seas.

There remains No. 3 boat under the first officer, Mr Smith. This boat's crew was at sea even longer than those in No. 1 boat, for they did not sight land until the twenty-fifth day, and it proved to be Mauritius. They had covered 1747 miles, and had lost six men during the passage, having suffered severely from exposure and a shortage of food and water—a common experience of shipwrecked sailors.

After writing this account of the boat-journey of the *Trevessa's* crew, quite accidentally I came, among some old records, upon the story of another shipwrecked crew that found refuge on the island of Rodriguez nearly a hundred years ago, though it does not compare with the story we have just told for distance covered. Briefly the story is as follows:

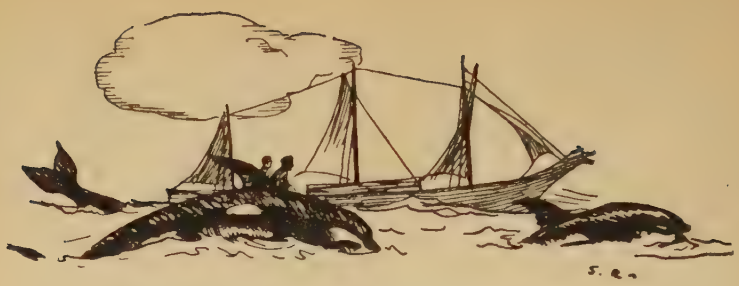
The *Earl of Eldon* left Bombay for London on September 24, 1834, with passengers and a cargo of cotton. The cotton was put aboard damp, which undoubtedly caused spontaneous combustion, and early on the morning of September 27 a passenger noticed what he thought to be steam issuing from the fore-hatchway. What he saw was smoke, and by 8 A.M. it was rolling out of the hatches in clouds. An hour later the decks were on fire, in spite of all the efforts of the carpenter and crew to extinguish the flames. The smoke and heat grew intolerable, and by mid-afternoon the order was passed to abandon ship. First the longboat was got over with twenty-five people in it, including three women and an infant. Stowed in this boat were 216 gallons of water, 20 gallons of brandy, and biscuits and preserved meat sufficient for one month. Two other boats got away with ten men in each, the captain, Theaker, being in one of them. After they had rowed off about a mile the ship's masts fell into the sea, raising a cloud of steam as they struck the water. At nine o'clock in the evening the powder-magazine blew up, and the people in the three boats saw their late home burst asunder and disappear under the waves. The captain decided to make for Rodriguez Island, which he computed was 450 miles away. So they set forth on a boat-journey that was to be

particularly trying because of the presence of three women and the four-months-old infant among them. One of the women and the child were ill when the fire broke out, which meant that there were two invalids to carry along. On the fourth day the captain's boat had become so unseaworthy that he and his men transferred themselves to the longboat, which was now so overloaded that its gunwale was only eight inches above the water.



With the aid of lugsails the two boats slowly reduced the distance between themselves and the land, meeting at times exceedingly bad weather and tempestuous seas. The discomfort of the women was pitiable, and, to protect them somewhat, a makeshift tent was rigged in the stern of the longboat with the aid of a piece of sailcloth. The daily ration of all hands was three biscuits, with a little jam, and a pint and a half of water, together with a gill of spirits to those who wanted it—a much more liberal allowance of liquids than the thirsty crew of the *Trevessa* dared take. Usually shipwrecked mariners suffer from lack of tobacco; but these men had all the tobacco they wanted in the shape of cigars, which some one had put in the longboat before leaving the ship.

On the thirteenth evening they saw land showing up out of the sea directly ahead; and when they had approached it nearer they lay to all night, not daring to attempt a landing in the darkness. At dawn they were six miles off shore, but by 8 A.M. they had got off the reefs and safely landed, and, as far as the record tells, with everybody safe.



CHAPTER IX

The "Tilikum" : The "Lady Hobart's" Boats

STANDING on a table before me is a small model of a cedarwood dugout canoe, bought from a Chinook Indian on the Puget Sound some years ago. This model is line for line a perfect replica in miniature of the canoe *Tilikum*, in which Captain Voss made his astonishing boat journey round the world between the years 1901 and 1904. Voss could never have accomplished such a feat of seamanship had he not been an experienced sailor who had already demonstrated the practicability of small-boat sailing in heavy weather.

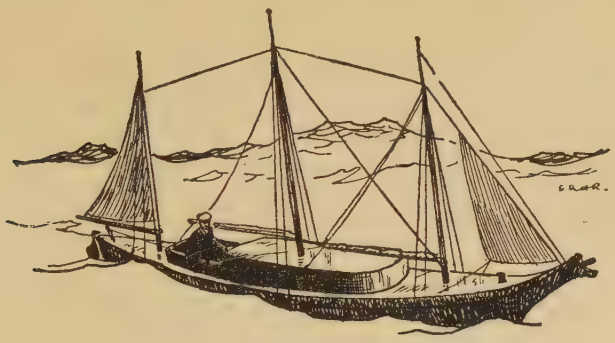
He first went to sea in his early teens, and spent most of his life in square-riggers, sailing between the western coast of the United States and Asiatic ports. Thus he came to know the Pacific Ocean as well as any man that ever sailed on her. He saw her in every mood between calm and hurricane, knew her winds, tides, and currents; and it will presently be seen how on one occasion, in later years, this intimate knowledge of the Pacific, coupled with his familiarity with the stars, was the means of saving his life. Among the seafaring experiences of Captain Voss figured the highly romantic adventure of a treasure-hunt to the famous Cocos Island, where pirates' booty to the value of over a million pounds is said to be buried. Though

he and his companions, sailing in the 10-ton sloop *Xora*, did not find any treasure, they found plenty of adventure from the very beginning of the voyage. They were nearly lost in a heavy gale in which for two days they lay hove to, riding to a sea-anchor. Then, when they arrived at the island, they nearly wrecked their sloop on a hidden reef which drove a hole through the little vessel below the water-line, though fortunately they were able to get her off on the tide and effect a makeshift repair. But Captain Voss, ever a philosopher, made the best of his failure to find the treasure by saying that at least it had been a fine adventure and he had made the valuable discovery that *a small craft is just as safe in a violent gale as a large vessel, if she is handled rightly.* It was this experience in a 10-ton sloop which later gave him the confidence to venture to sea in a dugout canoe. And he succeeded in his mad enterprise because he applied the lessons he had learned in the *Xora* years before. The salient point of these lessons was that a small boat can live in the worst seas *if her head is kept facing the wind.* All seamen knew this as applied to large vessels, for even they can be capsized if they broach to—*i.e.*, get broadside on to the wind and sea. Few sailors believed that such a small craft as a canoe could cross the ocean with comparative safety until Voss demonstrated it. Those who have read Captain Joshua Slocum's enthralling book *Sailing alone around the World* will remember that Slocum's boat, a 12-ton yawl, was up to that time the smallest craft to accomplish such a voyage. It was a remarkable journey in every way, achieved by a remarkable man, and was the indirect cause of a voyage that, for sheer daring and originality of conception, has no equal.

In the spring of 1901, when Voss was ashore at Victoria, British Columbia, temporarily without a ship, he was approached by a Canadian journalist named Luxton, who

informed him that he had had an offer of five thousand dollars if he could sail round the world in a vessel smaller than Captain Slocum's yawl, *The Spray*; and as Luxton was no sailor he would be willing to share the offer with Voss if the latter would join him in the undertaking. Luxton further said that he would write a book on it if they made the journey, and that the proceeds from the sale of the book should be shared between them. But did Voss think it possible to circumnavigate the globe in a vessel smaller than *The Spray*? The captain replied by asking for the size of that vessel. On being told that the yawl was about twelve tons he quietly announced that he would find a craft smaller than *The Spray*. Thus the compact was informally made, there and then, that the two should go together as soon as a suitable craft could be found. Luxton, having no sailing experience, left the choosing of a craft entirely with Voss. Had he known what sort of vessel the former would eventually choose, he would have been quite justified in withdrawing from such a mad adventure. For the intrepid captain bought from an Indian on Vancouver Island an old red-cedar dugout, a little more than 30 feet long and, of course, undecked. After a little palaver a bargain was struck, and the canoe changed hands; and one can imagine with what pleasure Mr Luxton gazed on the craft his partner had chosen in which to sail round the world! But even Voss was not such an impractical adventurer as to set out across the Pacific without first making the dugout as seaworthy as possible. Red cedar is very soft wood and easily damaged, so the whole canoe was strengthened inside with oak frames, and its gunwale heightened 7 inches by the addition of planking. A wooden keel was bolted on, and to this was fastened a lead keel weighing 300 pounds. The canoe was then decked over, and a tiny cabin big enough for one man to lie down in was built. This cabin, not much bigger than a dog-

kennel, was to be the captain's floating home for the next few years. Abaft the low cabin was a small cockpit in which the two men were to sit while sailing the *Tilikum* across the illimitable wastes of the Pacific. *Tilikum*, it may be explained, is the Chinook Indian word for friend; and when the little craft was reconditioned and shipshape, with three slender poles that were to serve as tiny masts sticking up from her thin decking, she was duly christened



THE "TILIKUM"

and put in the water for her trial trip. Her length of keel was 30 feet, her water-line breadth 4 feet 6 inches, and under her flooring was stowed 10 U.S. hundredweight of ballast. And somewhere aboard this cedarwood dug-out the crew contrived to stow two tanks of fresh water, containing 50 gallons each, besides three months' food stores, rifles, cameras, navigating instruments, and so on.

When the news got abroad of the proposed voyage round the world in a canoe, many people were incredulous; others assumed that the two men who planned such a voyage were madmen. There were even people who would have had the adventurous pair forcibly restrained. But, in spite of the wiseacres who shook their heads in melancholy disapproval, Voss and Luxton shoved off from the landing-stage at Victoria on May 21, and in a fair breeze stood

for the Straits of Juan de Fuca. One must commend the faith of these two men. They were starting on a journey across an expanse of ocean where, for many weeks, they would be beyond all human aid, save that provided by their own wits and strength. They would be confined to the small space of their cockpit and the tiny cabin, in which it was impossible to stand upright, frequently wet with heavy seas, each entirely dependent on the tact and good-will of the other for his peace of mind and much of the success of the voyage. Their vision of the horizon would be restricted to a range of but three or four miles, due to their low position in the water, and their navigation, the working out of their position by the sextant, would be necessarily uncertain, because of the jerky, tossing platform on which they must perforce stand to 'snap' the sun. Yet they sailed full of hope and confidence.

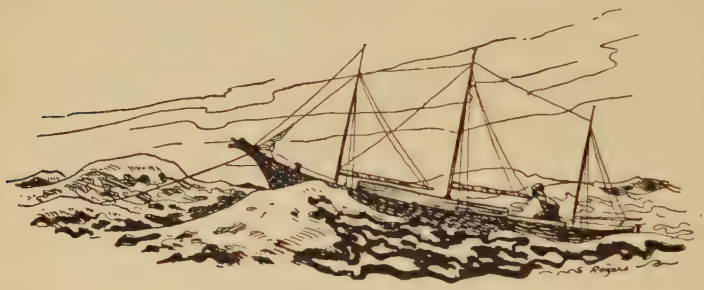
At the entrance to the straits they found the wind and sea against them, so they put into the little harbour of Port San Juan, where they remained for a few days, held up by the weather. But in less than a week the *Tilikum* was once more butting the waves, and within a few hours only the mountain-tops on Vancouver Island stood out of the sea astern. The critics had prophesied that Voss and his companion would not get safely out of sight of land, and this prophecy almost came true, for when still within sight of the mountains a big bowhead whale, which came thrashing through the seas pursued by killer whales, passed dangerously close to the *Tilikum*. Later a gale blew up, and in the mountainous seas it became necessary to heave to, an operation at which Luxton declined to assist, as he declared it unnecessary and dangerous. Voss, however, seems to have been as skilful in handling men as he was in handling sailing vessels, for, in the midst of a rising gale, when the necessity of heaving to was becoming every moment more urgent, he calmly talked to his companion

until the latter, seeing the reason of his argument, helped the skipper carry out the difficult manœuvre of heaving to, in time to save the craft. As the little captain expressed it, "There was no room to settle arguments."

The violent movement of the boat had succeeded in making Luxton feel seasick, and as the weather was so bad Voss decided to sail down the coast and put into some harbour where they could rest a day or so before finally leaving land for the long passage across the Pacific. At long last they got away from Dodge's Cove, where they had been hospitably entertained by some white settlers, and now set out in earnest on their hazardous voyage. Picture the tiny craft, a mere speck on the vast area of water misnamed the Pacific, a boat shorter in length than the waves it floated on. She sat so low in the water that when she slid down into the trough between two waves the wind could not strike her small sails, and they would flap idly until the vessel slid over the top of the wave, coming, as it were, out of the watery gully into the open, where the wind's force could be felt.

At first Voss had done most of the sailing and handling of the boat, as Luxton was not a sailor; but the time would come when the captain must rest, and he therefore had to instruct his companion in the art of sailing, so that he could manage the craft while Voss slept. He taught Luxton how to handle the sheet and tiller to the best advantage, how to tack, and something of the art of heaving to. He laid great stress on the necessity for promptly carrying out this manœuvre in a rising sea, for once the sea gets beyond a certain height heaving to is fraught with the greatest peril. Yet there is no choice but to do this in a small boat during a gale. Large ships are frequently forced into doing it: how much more necessary it must be for the lesser fry among sailing craft! All this Voss carefully explained to Luxton, so that in time of need he would know exactly what to do.

At first, as we have seen, Luxton, who was in normal circumstances a reasonable man, could not see the urgent need of heaving to when running before a gale; but with characteristic patience Voss showed how centuries of experience had taught seamen wisdom in these matters. Before long there came an opportunity to put the sailor's experience to the test. The wind came up and the seas rose, the great waves racing along under the scudding boat, and all the while the skipper watched the sea and sky for



THE "TILIKUM" HOVE TO

signs of a lessening of the wind's fury. But the sea rose higher, and the need to heave to became imperative. Voss explained to his mate how it is safe enough to let a small boat run before the seas as long as they are not breaking, but when the wave crests break and topple over, the boat is in great danger of being overwhelmed by them.

"Why should we not continue to run before the following seas?" demanded Luxton.

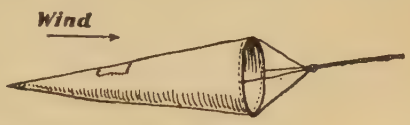
"Because," said the skipper, "when we get into the trough of the seas, the wind no longer reaches our sails and they become idle; and the boat in losing a little of her speed just gives the following wave the chance to break over on to her, and if that happens you are gone."

"But I cannot see why it is any safer to stop the boat's headway than to run before the wind," persisted Luxton.

"No, perhaps not," replied the older man, "but I will

explain the thing more fully. When a craft runs before a breaking sea her stern is pulled down by the suction of the water, and the stern being down, the seas fall on her and your vessel is swamped—'pooped,' the windjammer sailors would say. But if you stop your craft from rushing through the water by putting out a sea-anchor, the suction due to her speed will have gone; she is no longer held down, and rises to the oncoming waves, which slide under her. She is hove to and can safely ride out the worst gale."

The method of heaving to is to throw out, in the direction from which the wind is coming, a line to which is made fast a canvas bag held open at the end nearest the boat by a wooden hoop, or two cross-pieces of wood. The sea-anchor floats on the waves, and the boat, tailing off at the other end of the line by force of wind and sea, keeps the line taut, and so the boat's head is held more or less steady in the eye of the wind. In this position, slowly drifting, she will float like a duck, snug and dry, and as long as the line holds she is safe from all the ordinary hazards of her exposed position.



A SEA-ANCHOR

As the days went on Luxton learned quickly under the tuition of the skipper, and before they reached their first port of call in mid-Pacific the mate had become a good seaman, earning the whole-hearted praise of his companion. Every day the line of their track lengthened on the chart, and as the *Tilikum* came safely through each squall and steady gale the confidence of Voss both in his craft and the ultimate success of his undertaking grew steadily. Life on board her was by no means the hardship people imagined it would be. The loneliness of mid-ocean was relieved from boredom by many little incidents that men who live close to nature profit by, and on one occasion they raised a sail ahead, and were presently within hailing distance of

an American barquentine, being invited to come aboard for a 'visit.' But the invitation could not be accepted, lest the *Tilikum* should be dashed to pieces against the sides of the larger vessel, there being a heavy sea running. However, her friendly captain was able to pass them some fresh bread on a line, and after an exchange of news the *Tilikum* proceeded on her course. As they got farther

THE "TILIKUM" AT SEA

south the weather improved, and for many days they averaged over a hundred miles a day; indeed, when the wind was steady they reeled off over a hundred and fifty miles in twenty-four hours.

The first land was seen when they had been fifty-eight days out. This was Penrhyn Island, the landfall Captain Voss had planned to make, a fact which speaks well for his navigation. After staying here, and sailing among the neighbouring islands, they set forth again, and in the course of time reached Suva, in the Fiji group. Here Luxton decided to go on to Australia by steamer, and after discussing the matter with Voss found a man to take his place. The arrangement was amicably made, and the

sailor whom Luxton found to accompany his companion proved to be a good man. The new mate was an excellent seaman, and the little ship sailed merrily along its course for Australia, until it got into a storm area with very heavy seas, 600 miles west of Suva and 1200 miles from Sydney. And here happened a tragedy that would have crushed a less indomitable spirit than that of Captain Voss. In the height of the gale his companion was washed overboard and left far astern before the sail could be lowered and the sea-anchor thrown out. It was impossible to go back into the teeth of the gale in his cockleshell craft; and after riding at a sea-anchor for a long time Voss realized that his companion was really lost, and he must now sail on alone. Truly a shocking thought, but another shock was to come when he discovered that his binnacle and compass were swept away when his companion had gone overboard. Imagine the situation! He could not go back to Suva against the prevailing winds, so he must go forward; but how? How could mortal man steer a 1200-mile course alone, and without a compass? How could he make a landfall without a compass? But needs must when the devil drives, and Voss, recovering from his very human despair, decided to try to steer by the sun, moon, and stars in clear weather, and in dull weather by the ocean swell, which, to an experienced sailor, is a useful guide. He succeeded in overcoming his terrible plight, but he did even better than that, for the little *Tilikum* made her landfall almost exactly opposite the entrance to Sydney harbour. Here Luxton met him, but he had decided to abandon his part of the voyage, and Voss stayed ashore for some weeks while he made a few pounds as a showman exhibiting his boat. While the *Tilikum* was being transported overland it fell from a crane, and was so badly damaged that it looked as if the voyage had come to an end. But the undaunted skipper patched her up, found a new mate, and

set sail once more. New Zealand was visited, and here the new man gave up the voyage, so that Voss had to find still another sailing partner.

Many months were spent in the various New Zealand ports—Dunedin, Christchurch, Wellington, Auckland—and then came the day when the *Tilikum*, with a new mate—the fourth since leaving British Columbia—set sail for Durban and Europe *via* the New Hebrides and the Torres Straits. It was a roundabout way of sailing to South Africa, but Voss was a true traveller, who knew that the wisdom of going on a journey was not to look too eagerly to the end. He was in no hurry and all countries are interesting, so the anchor was dropped wherever fancy took him. In these waters he studied the amazingly interesting marine life of the tropics. In the shallows the sea-bed could be plainly seen with all its fantastically coloured marine plants and animals, and in the deeps he saw the giant basking sharks with their pilot-fish, and the loathsome yellow sea-snakes, octopus, dolphins, and the lordly whale.

From the Torres Straits, through the Great Barrier Reef, the little *Tilikum* sailed, and so light were the winds that a month was spent in crossing the Arafura Sea, between New Guinea and Australia. After this spell of the Doldrums they caught the south-easterly trade winds, and were soon out in the Indian Ocean, sighting to the north the Cocos, or Keeling, Islands, which are not, of course, to be confused with that Cocos Island which was the scene of the treasure-hunt in which Voss took part years before. The latter island lies to the south of the Isthmus of Panama, while the Cocos group is where the cruiser *Emden* made her last raid and met defeat.

After leaving the islands below the horizon on the starboard quarter the alarming discovery was made that the tanks contained but eight gallons of water. The next calling-place was Rodriguez, sixteen days' sail away if the

fair winds held; but if the winds swung ahead then almost certain death faced them. After discussing the matter they decided to risk it, and at once rationed themselves to a pint of water a day each. Fortunately the wind held, and Rodriguez was raised before their water was gone, and after a few days' stay they were at sea again, bound for Durban. At Durban the *Tilikum* was hauled ashore and taken round the country on exhibition. At Pretoria a new mate was engaged, and it was arranged that he should join his 'ship' at Cape Town. At the Cape the *Tilikum* was exhibited to thousands of people. They, like the inhabitants of the other towns to which the *Tilikum* had been taken, paid for the privilege of seeing her, and thus her captain was able to find the means to continue his voyage, which otherwise must have come to a premature end. At Cape Town Voss decided to cross the South Atlantic to Pernambuco, in Brazil, before proceeding to London. London could wait; the sea still held her lure.

So the *Tilikum* finished her circumnavigation of the globe with a grand flourish by crossing the South Atlantic to pay a courtesy call on the Brazilians. On the way across a stop was made at St Helena, mainly to permit the new mate to have a brief respite from the incessant tossing of the canoe, which had caused him continuous sickness ever since leaving the Cape. Pernambuco was reached on May 20, 1904, after a passage of thirty-six days. A fortnight later they left this port, where they had been received with great hospitality, and stood northward up the Atlantic with another 6000 miles to go before reaching London. And though the mate still suffered badly from seasickness he performed his duties perseveringly, and did his share in the sailing of the boat. They stopped at Ponta Delgada in the Azores for fresh provisions, the mate having by this time got over his seasickness and found his appetite again. On August 30 the *Tilikum* had the Lizard abeam

and the end of the journey was in sight. Two days later she arrived at Margate jetty. In London Voss was received by many distinguished people, and in recognition of his voyage round the world, which had taken three years and three months to accomplish, he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society.

Here the story of the *Tilikum* ends.

On June 22, 1803, the armed merchantman *Lady Hobart*, bound for Liverpool and two days out from Halifax, Nova Scotia, fell in with the French schooner *L'Aimable Julie*. As England was then at war with Napoleon, Captain Fellowes, of the *Lady Hobart*, ordered the guns to be run out, and after a short skirmish captured the schooner. A prize crew of volunteers was put on board the Frenchman, and the *Lady Hobart*, after taking on the prisoners, continued her interrupted passage.

During the next few days the *Lady Hobart* ran into heavy weather, and made such slow progress that on June 28 she was still in the neighbourhood of the Grand Banks, where fog is the rule rather than the exception. At one o'clock in the morning of that day, when half the ship's company were below getting what sleep they could, and the other half were crowded behind what shelter they could find on deck, the look-out yelled a warning of ice ahead, but his voice was lost in the gale. The next moment a vast cliff of ice loomed out of the blackness and hung over the mastheads as the ship struck. She was doing about eight knots at the time, and the force of the impact swung the vessel round, so that her stern post struck the ice and was immediately smashed. The rudder dropped out of the trunk, and the sea poured into the jagged hole made by the ice. The captain and the watch below, rudely awakened by the impact, rushed up on deck to find the ship rapidly settling by the stern. As a forlorn

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hope, the guns were heaved overboard and the anchors cut away, to lighten her. This was only temporarily effective, and, in a last effort to save her, two sails were passed underneath the keel, the intention being to plug the hole, allowing the sails to be forced into it by the pressure of water. But as the water continued to rise in the hold the prisoners were released and preparations were

made to abandon ship. Within fifteen minutes of striking the iceberg the *Lady Hobart's* decks were awash. The cutter and jolly-boat were launched in the big seas after considerable anxiety and danger, and the crew got into them. The ship's decks being level with the sea did not make this operation easier, for at one moment the boats were even with the rail, and the next they were carried up above the yard-arms on the heaving seas. Before quitting the ship the mails had been lashed to pigs of iron from the ballast and thrown overboard. This being done the captain and the mate, who were the last to leave the ship, now got into the boats by dropping into them from the

end of the spanker boom. The already overloaded boats were then pulled away from the ship, just in time to avoid the suction as she went down.

Picture the situation. An intensely black night, the stars hidden behind the low clouds, and the small boats laden with twenty-nine people, tossing on the mountainous seas, while the occupants strained every nerve to keep their craft from being capsized. Somewhere in the darkness near by floated the monster iceberg that had destroyed the ship. This was an enemy more deadly than the sea, and all hands kept a keen look-out in the gloom for its sudden appearance. Every man, prisoner and captor alike, drawn together in the presence of a common danger, applied himself to an oar or to baling to keep the boats afloat through the dreadful night. The cutter, the larger of the two boats, which was 20 feet long, had in it eighteen people. The jolly-boat, 14 feet long, carried eleven people, and both boats were so heavily laden that they were down in the water to within six inches of the gunwale.

All night the two boats kept within sight of each other at some risk of colliding, and when the daylight came the provisions and water were divided and plans made for reaching the nearest land at St John's, which Captain Fellowes computed to be 350 miles away. The provisions in the boat consisted of 45 pounds of biscuit, with a little over 5 gallons of water. In addition there was half a barrel of spruce beer, a demijohn of rum, and a few bottles of wine.

The tale of the next eleven days is the typical story of shipwrecked sailors in small boats, of starvation and exposure to the elements. Forty-five pounds of food between twenty-nine people is something less than two pounds for each person. Slightly more than two and a half ounces of sodden biscuit per day! Starvation is a more dangerous enemy than the sea. And invariably we wonder why shipwrecked sailors push off in their small boats

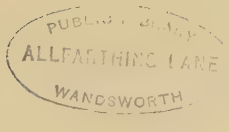
without the foresight to take sufficient food and water with them. We are apt to be critical of such precipitate, unthinking haste, until we begin to remember that there is often not time to store the boats with the necessary provisions and water. Or again, if the sea is rough, the difficulties of getting anything at all into the bobbing craft are almost insurmountable, and the wretched people are only too thankful to get away with their lives.

At first the winds were against the two boats, and they made slow progress toward St John's. The cutter took the jolly-boat in tow; but this had to be given up when the weather was bad, because of the constant jerking strain of the tow-line on the two boats. On July 1 the smaller craft had to be cast adrift in a heavy gale, and it soon disappeared from the sight of those in the cutter. Being too small to be safe in such big seas, it was given up for lost. Every one in the cutter was now beginning to feel the hardships of constant exposure, and many wandered in their minds, the French captain becoming delirious. On July 3 the unhappy man jumped overboard and was drowned, the strain having been too much for him. The illusions of the people in the boat took the form of phantom ships and banquets.

On July 4, at daybreak, many signs of land were seen—floating seaweed, driftwood, and birds. The next day as the sun rose the fog over the sea gradually lifted and disclosed to the fevered eyes of the castaways—land! It was real land this time, and not more than a mile away. It proved to be Conception Bay, 14 leagues from the port of St John's. To their great comfort they saw the jolly-boat near the shore. It had safely weathered the gales and brought all its people to land in safety. And with the exception of the unfortunate captain of *L'Aimable Julie* every one recovered from his terrible experience.

PART IV

SEA MYSTERIES



ST ELMO'S LIGHTS

CHAPTER X

The "Mary Celeste": The "Waratah": The "President": Sir John Franklin

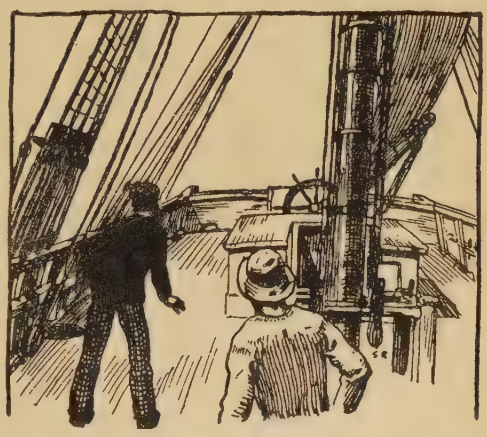
On the heaving waters of the deep, where there are neither towns nor cities, and no life as we know it on land, there seems less opportunity for the dramatic incident than the infinitely varied life ashore affords. Yet the sea has been the stage upon which have been acted as many moving dramas, loves, hates, mysteries, and heroism as ever were played upon land ; and no mystery of a moated grange could be greater than that which confronted the crew of the barque *Dei Gratia*, of Nova Scotia, when, on December 5, 1872, they came, in mid-Atlantic, upon the abandoned brigantine *Mary Celeste*. They brought home a story of the sea that has become a classic, and a conundrum that has never really been solved, though a hundred guesses have been made, and the people of two continents have puzzled their heads over it ever since.

The *Dei Gratia* raised two vessels that morning, one a tramp steamer which proved to be a German vessel bound for the West Indies, and the other a brigantine. There was nothing remarkable about that, except that the brigantine was behaving as if she was sailed by a drunken

crew. The sea was smooth, but the little vessel would yaw, and when the wind changed a point or so she would run before it, a style of progress that aroused the greatest curiosity among the crews of the *Dei Gratia* and the tramp steamer. Both vessels signalled the brigantine, but got no reply, whereupon the German steamer proceeded on her course, but the Nova Scotian captain sailed in closer and examined the mysterious craft through his telescope. On close inspection the decks appeared to be deserted, although there was no sign of disorder to suggest a derelict condition, as would have been the case had she been abandoned in a storm. The *Dei Gratia's* captain decided to board the stranger, taking with him the second mate and two men. They approached her with circumspection; it was possible there was a plague aboard, or she might be in the hands of a madman. Drawing close, they rounded her stern and read "*Mary Celeste*, New York," and a few moments later they hooked on to her chains and climbed on board. On the deck all was silent. Not a living thing in sight—or a dead one. The visitors called out "Ahoy!" once, twice, thrice, but there came no response. It was an uncanny situation. The captain and his three men began at once to search the vessel systematically from fo'c'sle to the cabins under the poop. Everything was in order, every brace and halliard was belayed to its proper pins. There was an eerie feeling about it all, and as the men slowly walked aft, on the alert for anything that might happen, they peered behind casks and into the galley, expecting to find round every corner the body of a man. The main-hatch cover was lying partly off the hatch opening, and they peered into the hold, expecting, perhaps, dead men, but

in the darkness they saw nothing but the tops of barrels—the cargo, whatever it might be.

If the vessel had been in disarray the absence of the crew would have been easier to explain, but everything was in perfect order, as it should be on a well-run ship. There seemed nothing missing—except the crew. But on examining the cabin it was discovered that the chronometer was missing, though this discovery only plunged the mystery into deeper darkness. As the examination proceeded the problem grew more baffling. There were no indications of trouble or of a discontented crew. Life on board had evidently gone on quite normally until the moment she had been abandoned. Clothes were drying on a line, and on the cabin table stood the remains of a half-finished meal, breakfast probably, as there was an egg in an egg-cup on one plate.



The presence of these undisturbed pieces of tableware showed that the vessel had not been long abandoned, as it is never calm for long in mid-Atlantic, especially in December, and these dishes would have been thrown on to the cabin floor by the movement of the sea had they been there long. The remains of breakfast were in a pot in the galley, and some razors were found quite free from rust. In the cabin a sewing-machine stood open with part of a child's dress under the needle, and near by lay some toys, which suggested the recent presence of a woman and child, probably the captain's wife and little daughter. On

a shelf were many religious books and some music, and a cashbox was found intact, along with some jewellery—a fact which dispelled any suspicion of high-seas robbery. In the tanks was plenty of water, and in the cuddy an abundance of food. The well was dry, the brigantine was free from leakage: there seemed no reason at all why she should have been abandoned. In the mate's cabin the logbook was found, but there was no entry in it to shed any light on the mystery. The last entry had been made a little over a week previously; but not a line was there that could help the puzzled men of the *Dei Gratia*. The whole condition of the vessel gave the impression that, whatever the reason, she had been abandoned in the greatest hurry, as if the crew had dropped whatever they were doing instantly and tumbled overboard; but whether into the sea or into a waiting boat could only be guessed at.

With the captain of the *Dei Gratia* and his three men let us examine the brigantine more closely. Standing on a table in the cabin was a bottle of medicine, a certain indication that the vessel had been abandoned only recently, for, like the breakfast dishes, it could not have remained there long without being upset by the motion of the ship. There was also the further evidence of the unspoilt food to show that the crew had not long since departed. There were no indications of mutiny, no signs of conflict, no weapons or disorder, and the money-box in the cabin, like the jewellery found there, was untouched. Neither robbery nor greed was the motive for the abandonment of the *Mary Celeste*. There was one slender clue to the theory of violence, but that was so circumstantial as to prove nothing. In the cabin a cutlass in its scabbard was found, and on examination it showed certain dark stains which might have been blood. In the starboard bow, too, stains on the rail were noticed which might also have been blood. On the same rail was a cut, as if made by a hatchet or a cutlass.

There were indications that some one had deliberately tried to open seams in the planking of the bows just above the water; but if this was done by some person with the intention of sinking the vessel he had either changed his mind or been interrupted in his amiable designs.

The hold was next examined. It contained several hundred barrels of alcohol in perfect condition, with no leakage to give off poisonous fumes. In the fo'c'sle the sailors' dunnage lay about on the bunks, and their chests contained their private possessions, all the trivial and pathetic trinkets dear to a sailor's heart. Everything on board seemed in place, nothing disturbed and nothing missing, except the chronometer and the crew.

As the *Dei Gratia* was bound for Gibraltar, the captain decided to try to bring the abandoned brigantine into that port. Towing would have been a long and difficult task, and it is presumed a few men from the *Dei Gratia* were put aboard the derelict. At any rate she was eventually brought into Gibraltar, where the American Consul was informed and a claim for salvage money made. Cablegrams began to fly back and forth between New York and Gibraltar, and the previous history of the *Mary Celeste* was soon known. She had left New York for Genoa in September 1872, with Captain Griggs as master. She was entered in the American Register as a brigantine of 206 tons, built in Nova Scotia and owned by a Mr Winchester. The captain was an able commander, well known and respected in seafaring circles. He often took his wife and child on voyages with him, and apparently they were aboard when the *Mary Celeste* was abandoned.

After the usual legal delays and inquiries the Court at Gibraltar awarded the captain and crew of the *Dei Gratia* the sum of £1700, and, as far as they were concerned, the matter was ended. But from time to time, through the years that have passed since the crew of the *Dei Gratia*

trod the silent decks of the *Mary Celeste*, people have come forward with theories about the mystery; but so far no one has ever produced any conclusive proofs of how the story ended. The fact that neither the captain nor his family ever appeared to tell the world their story naturally points to foul play. Otherwise, would not one or the other have some day come out from their obscurity and, as the honest folk we feel they were, explained the mystery and relieved what would otherwise have been a burden on their conscience? But they could not do so if they were dead, and, being dead, how then did they meet their end? The *Mary Celeste* was not a plague ship, there was no sign of any foul sickness having slowly wiped out her company. On the other hand, there was no clear evidence of mutiny, for, had there been a mutiny, why should not the crew (after killing the after-guard) have taken possession of the brigantine and sailed away; or, if they wished to abandon her, why did they not go in her boats? And why had they not taken the money and jewellery from the cabin? The mystery resolves itself into one big interrogation mark. The notion of mutiny can be dismissed. What then? Did they abandon their vessel out of fear—fear of the cargo perhaps? Did something happen to cause them to think the cargo would blow them up, or did fumes come up from a damaged barrel in the hold and cause the captain and his men to fear that if they stayed aboard they would be asphyxiated? Did they go off in a small boat they had aboard, of which the *Dei Gratia* men were not aware, and was this small boat capsized or wrecked later? It seems certain that, whatever may have been the reason for abandoning the ship, the *Mary Celeste's* people all eventually perished at sea, because in any company of people there is sure to be some one who, sooner or later, will talk, and when one has talked the secret is out. In view of the enormous publicity the mystery was given at the time, it

is unlikely that all the members of the *Mary Celeste's* company would have remained silent had any of them been alive. But undoubtedly they were dead, though how they perished we can only guess; just as we can but guess why they left their trim little brigantine. Believers in sea-serpents and marine monsters which inhabit the regions of the utter dark, " where the blind white sea-snakes are," have suggested that some terrifying monster rose from the sea and stole the crew from off her decks, thrusting, like some gigantic squid, its deadly tentacles among the slender cordage of the brigantine to drag forth the terrified crew lurking there. Such a suggestion is, of course, far too fantastic to be entertained, for even if polyps grow to such enormous proportions (and this, we confess, is possible from the evidence of whalers), how could such an animal steal a ship's crew without doing damage or putting the vessel in a disorder that was so noticeably absent on the shipshape *Mary Celeste*?

As for the mysterious brigantine herself, she was returned to her American owner, who without delay sent her to sea again with a fresh crew. After one voyage she was sold. But she had become a ' hoodooed ' ship. Sailors shunned her, and great difficulty was experienced in getting her a crew. As a self-respecting vessel she lost caste, and had to take on charters that she would have refused in better days. She ended her unfortunate career in 1885 on the Cuban coast, where she was wrecked in such circumstances that her captain was suspected of having brought about her end intentionally.

While the *Mary Celeste* mystery is one of the most puzzling in maritime records, there have been many mysteries at sea that are sufficiently uncanny to arouse speculation over their solutions. Many ships have disappeared ' into the blue,' but always it has been reasonable to suppose that they have foundered with all hands. There

is no other satisfactory solution to such mysteries, but the case of the American brigantine was of quite another kind.

Of ships that have completely disappeared without leaving the faintest trace of their disappearance the s.s. *Waratah* is a comparatively recent instance. Here was a great liner of more than 16,000 tons that literally disappeared into the unknown. She dissolved, with her crew and passengers, into nothingness as completely as if she had never existed at all except in the imagination. The *Waratah*, with a crew of one hundred and nineteen and ninety-two passengers on board, left Durban, South Africa, on July 26, 1909, for London. Arriving at Durban from Australia, her next port of call, homeward bound, was Cape Town. She was a new vessel, classed A1 at Lloyd's, and this was her second voyage. The maiden voyage had passed without incident, and though the captain had nothing to complain of about the ship, he had noticed that she was inclined to be somewhat cranky in anything like a heavy sea. After leaving Durban she was next seen by the *Clan MacIntyre*, a smaller vessel which sighted her on the evening of the next day. Neither steamer having wireless, they signalled each other, and the faster ship passed on, quickly leaving the *Clan MacIntyre* hull-down behind. On arrival at Cape Town the latter reported having signalled the *Waratah*, receiving her name and port. The smaller steamer had run into a bad head-sea later on in the day that she was passed by the *Waratah*, and encountered a gale which increased to a hurricane the next day. The little *Clan MacIntyre* reported one of the most violent storms she had ever encountered; but although the bigger ship was overdue at Cape Town, no great anxiety was felt at first, as smaller craft had weathered the hurricane. It was thought possible that the *Waratah* was disabled and was slowly limping along, perhaps under jury rudder or

with an engine-breakdown. However, as time went on and the *Waratah* failed to appear, genuine alarm began to be felt, and anxious relatives and friends besieged the shipping offices of the company for news. But, alas! there was no news to give. The liner had been completely wiped out as if she had never had reality at all. The sea had literally closed over the ship and her unfortunate people. After the *Clan MacIntyre* had watched her disappear below the horizon ahead she was never seen by any vessel again.

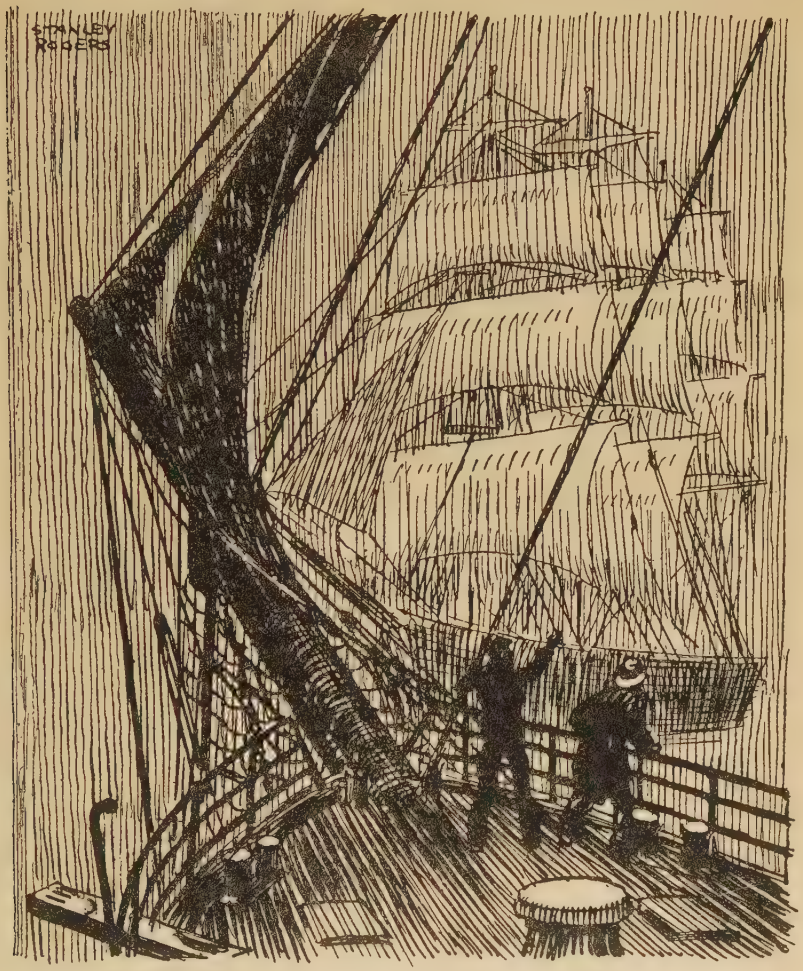
Nor was there ever found the usual flotsam and jetsam of a foundered ship to give a clue to the mystery. Certainly floating wreckage was reported after the gale, but no conclusive evidence of its having been part of the *Waratah's* equipment was shown, and, furthermore, the wreckage seen was only such stuff as might be expected to be found floating on the surface of the seas after a severe hurricane.

For months afterward the sea in that locality was searched and patrolled by Government vessels and private craft, but nothing of the *Waratah* was found. The Blue Anchor Line sent out a steamer which searched for nearly three months, and covered nearly 15,000 miles of sea, in quest of evidence to show how the *Waratah* had disappeared; but she too returned without news to a waiting world. A hundred theories were offered to account for her disappearance. Some said she was still afloat but disabled,

and probably drifting out of control in Antarctic waters; others suggested that she had foundered through springing a leak or through heavy seas entering open hatches; but the commonest theory was that in the rough seas she met during the violent hurricane she had capsized. That is the writer's own belief, and there seems plenty of evidence to show the probability of this fact. She seems to have been a top-heavy ship and far too easily inclined to roll. In this rolling during the storm her cargo (for she carried a great quantity of cargo) might have shifted and caused a permanent list, which increased until a particularly heavy beam sea rolled the ship completely over. This capsizing theory is strengthened by the evidence of a passenger who left the *Waratah* at Durban, and so saved his life by avoiding the fatal passage between Durban and the Cape. This passenger deliberately left the ship because he thought her top-heavy and unsafe. Others came forward, people who had sailed in the ship on her maiden voyage, and stated that they thought the *Waratah* top-heavy. Indeed, there was so much of this sort of talk that one is inevitably made to feel that the disappearance of the *Waratah* was due to her turning turtle during an exceptionally violent hurricane, though why no wreckage was ever found is a considerable mystery in itself.

It must not be supposed that the case of the *Waratah* was unique, for actually over a score of comparatively large vessels have disappeared in the past hundred years without leaving a trace behind them. The disappearance of the s.s. *President* is a mystery quite as remarkable as that of the *Waratah*, if not more so, but because the date of her disappearance is more remote it has not that colour of reality that we feel so strongly about an incident that happens within our own time. It was on March 11, 1841, that the Royal Mail Steam Packet *President* sailed from

New York for Liverpool with one hundred and twenty-one people aboard, of whom twenty-seven were passengers.



Among these passengers was Tyrone Power, a famous Irish actor of the day. The *President* met exceedingly heavy gales on the second and third days out. (This is known by the reports of other vessels, which experienced

bad weather in the same latitudes and at the same time that the *President* would be passing through them.) In Liverpool the non-arrival of the packet was not commented upon till March 31, when the papers announced that the s.s. *President* was overdue. On April 2 another Western Ocean packet arriving at Liverpool said she had met with excessively heavy weather two weeks previously. She had also passed much ice in the steamer track, including not a few icebergs of great size. On April 7, as the ship was felt to be lost, the full passenger list was printed in some papers; and public interest was aroused all over the country as to what had happened to the *President*. It was taken for granted that sooner or later some wreckage would be washed ashore or found at sea, or that even, by a gracious miracle, the passengers and crew would be found safe in some foreign port after being picked up by another ship. Meanwhile, in England and America the interest grew. Queen Victoria took keen interest in the matter, and gave orders that the slightest news concerning the vessel's fate should be given her as soon as it came. As is usual when ships at sea are missing, there were innumerable false rumours about. The newspapers wasted much good ink, and raised many forlorn hopes in anxious hearts, by recounting the reports of letters and messages received from survivors. Tyrone Power came especially into the limelight of the melancholy drama by news that a bottle had been washed ashore—somewhere, some time—in which

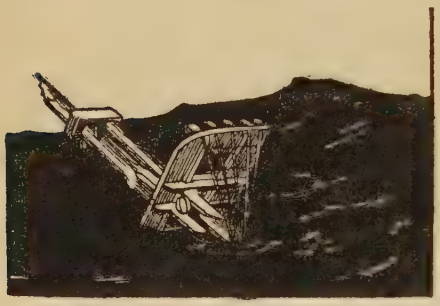
THE "PRESIDENT"

was a hastily scribbled message from the actor. On this scrap of stained paper found in the bottle cast up by the sea were the words, "The *President* is sinking. God help us all. Tyrone Power." And no one knows to this day whether Tyrone Power wrote the message or not, though it is fairly certain that he did not, for there were many cruel hoaxes played upon the relatives of those who were lost. Hence this bottle message was not taken very seriously when it was found. Even if it had been written by Tyrone Power, it did not explain why the ship had disappeared.

Gradually the people of England and America resigned themselves to the inevitable conclusion that the *President's* crew and passengers were really lost, and those who had relatives to mourn at length gave up hope, and those who had insurance to claim claimed it. And the world pursued its business as it always does, as if nothing had happened, and the strange story of the s.s. *President* became like a legend of the past.

If at this late date an opinion on the disappearance of this ship is of any interest, the following theory may be offered as likely enough. It is not probable that the *President* capsized, for she was a paddle-steamer, and the very width of the outboard paddle-boxes and paddle-wheels formed a sort of stabilizer (like the outriggers on Polynesian canoes), to keep the vessel from taking a dangerous list. A great deal of ice was seen in the steamer track about that time by other ships, and is it not more than probable that the *President* suffered the same fate as that which befell the *Titanic* seventy years after? But the mystery of the *President* remains in the fact that, whatever the cause of her loss, nothing was ever found belonging to the ship or those on board her. Like the *Waratah*, she sailed into the blue and was swallowed up. When a ship plunges under the waves through being holed below the water-line,

by being pooped, or by capsizing, she must in the nature of things leave a quantity of *débris* floating on the surface of the water, and that wreckage, in the course of time, is washed ashore on some more or less distant land, unless of course it is picked up at sea. There are many loose and buoyant things on a ship's deck. These bob about on the boiling surface that marks the spot where the vessel went down, and by these tokens we know something of the fate she suffered. Deck-chairs, unhinged doors, hatch-covers, gratings, cabin furniture, lifebuoys, spars, casks, and broken woodwork all offer tangible evidence of the ship's foundering. It is there before your eyes, and the final drama is not difficult to reconstruct; but when a fine ship of such solid stuff as oak and pine, and carrying over one hundred people aboard, is spirited away into the unknown without leaving a trace of evidence to show how she disappeared, you have a first-class mystery which defies any definite and conclusive solution. Is it then a wonder that the simple-hearted sailor is superstitious?



In the thirties of the last century the governor of the young British colony of Tasmania was a man who had, previous to this appointment, done distinguished service in the Navy, particularly in Arctic exploration. This old sea-dog was none other than Sir John Franklin, then nearly sixty years of age and settled down to an honourable life ashore. Franklin served seven years as Governor of Tasmania, and returned to England about the time the Admiralty were planning to send out another Arctic expe-

dition to carry on the work of Ross and Parry. When the matter of a commander was discussed, the name of Franklin, as senior Arctic explorer, was suggested, with the result that, though there was some slight opposition on the score of his age, he was offered the command—and it was accepted.

The polar ships *Erebus* and *Terror*, already veterans, were recommissioned and fitted with every appliance to further the purpose of the expedition. As an aid to their sails they were provided with engines driving screw propellers. Franklin's orders were to find a north-west passage to the Bering Strait, an ambitious undertaking for those days. The two vessels left England at the end of May in 1845, expecting to be back in two years or, at the latest, by the end of 1847. To provide against untoward circumstances, the ships carried provisions sufficient for three years.

Sir John Franklin

They were a happy crowd of men. Every one on board was eagerly looking forward to the time when they would be in the north, and the letters sent home before they left the last outpost of civilization reflected their exuberant spirits. The ships entered the lonely northern waters early in July, and on the 24th they were spoken by the Dundee whaler *Prince of Wales*, Captain Dannet. The *Erebus* and *Terror* were moored to an iceberg and signalled "All's well." Captain Dannet was invited to lunch with Franklin the next day, but, a fair wind having come up meanwhile, Franklin took advantage of it and sailed away. After that the two ships were never seen again by white men.

The Government did not feel any anxiety about Franklin and his men until the autumn of 1847, when, as no news had come from them, it was decided to send a relief expedition. Not knowing which way Franklin had sailed since he was last seen in Lancaster Sound, the search-vessels, *Herald* and *Plover*, under Commanders Kellett and Moore, had to work more or less by hazard. Nothing came of this search, but the authorities pursued the quest until, by 1851, no less than five expeditions were cruising above the Arctic Circle in search of clues to Franklin's fate. These searchers made several minor discoveries which cast some light on the mystery. On August 23, on an island known as Beechey Island, the graves of four men belonging to the *Erebus* and *Terror* were found, and near by was a hut, around which were scattered a variety of things such as rope, preserved food tins, coal-bags, and bits of clothing. Some miles away other articles were found, but no writing to throw any light on the expedition's fate and no sign of the ships themselves.

Then, in March 1854, Dr John Rae, an explorer for the Hudson's Bay Company, travelling in the North with four companions, met an Eskimo who told them a story about some white men—*Kabloonas*, they called them—who had died of starvation four winters before. He said that Eskimo seal-hunters, far to the west across a great river, had seen a party of about forty white men travelling across the ice with sledges. They were tired and looked ill, but after stopping to barter for a seal they passed on to the south. Later on in the same winter the frozen bodies of thirty sailors were found by the Eskimo. Some of the bodies were in tents, and one, an officer, had a telescope strapped over his shoulders.

Rae found among the natives many articles that obviously were once owned by members of the lost expedition. Some of these possessions were brought back and are now in

England. Rae, as the first person to bring definite news of Franklin, received the Government's award of £10,000.

The relics brought back served to stir up interest in further search-expeditions, and among these was the one that sailed in the *Fox*, a steam yacht of 150 tons sent out by Lady Franklin herself. These later parties found further signs of the lost ships, and, what was most important of

all, a written message signed by three officers of the expedition. It was dated May 28, 1847, with another date, April 25, 1848, added later. The paper contained a message written under the first date giving the position and information that all was well with the party, but around the margin was another message written later, which told the whole tragic story in a few words. It said that the ships had been deserted and that Sir John Franklin had died in June 1847. Besides this important message the search-parties continued to find a great many Franklin relics, including a boat which the weakened men were unable to drag over the ice. In the boat was the dead body of one of the men, and near by lay the body of another.

But, after all the search-expeditions had returned to civilization, back in the far North, during the long winter nights, slant-eyed men and women sat round the stone blubber-lamps in the *igloos*, listening to the tribal story-tellers as they recounted the tale of the *Kabloonas* who had lost their great *umiaks* in the ice.

CHAPTER XI

The Lost Frigates, and other Sea Mysteries

For many years the strange disappearance, in 1788, of two French frigates, *L'Astrolabe* and *La Boussole*, was a complete mystery, but after a period of nearly half a century this mystery was unravelled, and many relics of the lost ships are now displayed in the Marine Museum of the Louvre in Paris.

During the eighteenth century the Pacific was the happy hunting-ground of marine explorers who were anxious to add lustre to their names and new territory to their flag. Thus these two frigates sailed from the naval port of Brest, on August 1, 1785, on a voyage of discovery to the South Pacific, a voyage that may have been inspired by the successes of Captain Cook and other British navigators in that part of the world. The two frigates were equipped with everything that science and money could provide for the success of the expedition. The foremost scientists and the finest sailors, the most perfect instruments, and holds stored with ample provisions presaged a successful voyage. The expedition was under the command of one of France's most skilful navigators, Commander Jean François de Galaup, Comte de la Pérouse, a man, then over forty, who

had distinguished himself in French naval wars. Though he had fought against the British, he had proved himself such a chivalrous fighter that he had won the hearts of his enemies and their respect for his qualities as a sailor. No better man could have been chosen to lead the expedition that set out with such high hopes and which ended in such grim disaster. La Pérouse commanded the *Boussole*, while the *Astrolabe* was captained by the Vicomte de Langle, a very able sailor; and the total company, including scientists, officers, and men, in the two ships was two hundred and twenty-three. Judging from the orders La Pérouse received from the Government, it seems that he had instructions to survey most of the Pacific Ocean and chart whatever uncharted islands they might discover, annexing these in the name of France. Furthermore, the scientific staff were to note and study the natural resources of whatever lands they might explore and report fully on their condition, their suitability as military and naval stations, and, last but not least, their commercial possibilities.

The two frigates sailed out of Brest on a fine August morning and stood for Madeira, whence, having called for water and fresh fruit, they continued south to Cape Horn, which was safely rounded in the winter. For several months the two little frigates, now showing the effects of sea and weather, cruised among the islands of the South Pacific, and then sailed north and east for months, until at last they sighted the mainland of North America in the latitudes of the inhospitable coasts of Alaska. Here the expedition met its first serious mishap. Two boats loaded with seamen, while taking soundings close to the shore, capsized by getting into a beam sea, and twenty-one men were drowned. After this disaster the commander ordered the expedition south, and by the end of the summer the two ships had worked slowly down the coast, taking constant observations the while, until they reached the coast of Cali-

fornia. Then they stood out to sea again, shaping a course almost due east.

Imagine the fine resolution of these early navigators, sailing in leaky, cranky ships, twenty thousand miles from their base, in a vast waste of uncharted waters where the coast-lines bore no warning lighthouses, and where sailors were in constant danger of hidden reefs at sea and hostile natives on land. The wonder is not that some ships were lost but that any ever returned.

In December 1786 La Pérouse let go his anchor at

Samoa, and here his second-in-command went ashore with three or four boats' crews to find fresh water. They were received amiably enough by the natives, but when the time came for the Frenchmen to depart their dusky friends were loth to let the visitors go. The reluctance rapidly grew to an attempt at active restraint, and when the white men were leaving a few stones were thrown from those on the beach, and many pairs of brown hands laid hold of the gunwales of the boats to drag them ashore. A desperate fight ensued, during which the Vicomte de Langle was knocked into the water and set upon by the frenzied natives. The battle raged with fury until two of the boats, full of bruised and wounded sailors, managed to escape and pull aboard the ship with what haste their weakened powers would permit. The loss to the expedition, apart from the

boats and gear, was twelve men, including the commander of the *Astrolabe*.

We next hear of the two frigates at Botany Bay, where they arrived early in 1788. While there La Pérouse left dispatches to be forwarded to France. These dispatches informed his Government what his next movements would be. They included a cruise among the islands of Polynesia and round the coast of Australia, and then home *via* the Cape of Good Hope. This plan, if carried out, would have brought La Pérouse round the world, but he never lived to realize his dream, for, after a few weeks at Botany Bay, the two frigates with their crews sailed into the unknown, and nothing was heard of them again for over forty years. For nearly half a century the fate of the expedition of La Pérouse remained as profound a mystery as ever puzzled the minds of men. The two frigates simply vanished, and though their failure to return home at the appointed time (the end of 1788) created considerable talk in France, just then the country became so occupied with the affairs which ended in the Revolution that gradually the expedition's fate was forgotten. But in the year 1791, when the French people had got over the first excitements of the Revolution and had settled down to the new order, they began to remember La Pérouse, and bestirred themselves to send out an expedition in search of the lost frigates.

Two vessels were equipped and dispatched under the command of General d'Entrecasteaux. The two ships were aptly named the *Recherche* and the *Espérance*, and the commander had strict orders to go to Botany Bay and thence to follow the track of the *Astrolabe* and the *Boussole* as outlined in the last dispatch of La Pérouse. The expedition failed to achieve its object—the finding of the lost ships—and this was, at least in part, due to the failure of the commander to carry out explicitly the orders he had received in France. He began by chasing a false clue that

had reached him about natives in the Admiralty Islands having been seen wearing French naval uniforms, and after finding nothing evidential on calling at these islands he cruised about the South Pacific without meeting with any success. Everything seems to have gone wrong. There were quarrels with natives, and then the deadly disease of scurvy attacked the ships' crews, until, sick and disheartened, they arrived at Java, only to find themselves prisoners and their ships taken as prizes. France and Holland had declared war, and, Java being a Dutch colony, the luckless French sailors had walked right into the enemy camp. Meanwhile the foolish wars went on. Napoleon's star was rising, and France, full of pride at the victories of her new armies, very naturally forgot La Pérouse and his men. Then came a little incident, one of those small things that so often lead to great events. It was an incident which was again to turn the minds of Frenchmen to thoughts of their lost countrymen.

Some time between the years 1812 and 1813 a certain adventurous Irishman, named Peter Dillon, was mate of a small vessel (probably a brig) cruising among the Fijis for sandalwood, and while at Fiji his vessel was attacked when near the shore by a crowd of the bushy-haired natives, who, after a desperate battle, killed most of Dillon's crew. But Dillon himself and four or five others escaped in the ship. Among the men who escaped was a German sailor, called Bushart, who had a native wife. This lady not being in the best of health and finding life aboard ship intolerable, Bushart prevailed upon the captain to put him and his wife ashore as soon as possible. With them there elected to go a Mohammedan sailor. When the vessel, which was named *Hunter*, sighted the island of Tucopia in the New Hebrides, the three were sent ashore there and bid good-bye by their mates. This was in 1813, and nothing more was heard of the marooned people until

thirteen years later, when Dillon, now a captain, happening to be in the neighbourhood of the island of Tucopia, bethought himself of his erstwhile shipmates left there years before. He at once stood for the land, off which the ship anchored, while he went ashore in the longboat. Whether he was surprised to find Bushart and the Arab there or not, we cannot tell, but find them he did, and the meeting led to an incident that was of greater moment than the simple reunion of old friends. Dillon noticed that one of his men had become possessed of the silver guard of an officer's sword, and, his curiosity being awakened at the finding of such an unusual thing in such a place, he asked the man where he got it from, and was told that it had been received from the Arab in exchange for some fish-hooks. Dillon's curiosity caused him to ask for the sword-guard that he might examine it, but finding nothing about it of especial interest except some half-effaced marks, inquired how it had come to be in such a remote spot. Bushart then informed Dillon that he had often seen the natives with all sorts of articles that must have been obtained from some ship. Possibly they were got in trade. But when the astute Dillon heard that the blacks possessed such things as silver knives and spoons, and fine articles that could only be the handiwork of civilized craftsmen, he scented some mystery worth inquiring into, and proceeded to question the simple Bushart and the Arab. And this is what he was told.

The natives of the neighbouring island of Vanikoro had brought over for purpose of trade with the Tucopian natives a great number of objects such as knives, pieces of iron, blocks, tableware, silver money, and so forth—an oddly assorted collection which they had got from two great ships that had been wrecked on their island many years before. The natives told their story around their camp-fires, and during the years the telling of it had slightly altered by the weaving into the main thread of bits of

folk-lore, stories of demons and evil spirits. But still, the main facts stood out plainly enough, and there seemed no reason to doubt the tale. It was told with many a dramatic gesture (for natives are born actors) how, while the two giant "canoes" that moved with wings and carried each

a hundred men were anchored off two tiny islets near the main island of Vanikoro, the God of the Wind caused a terrible storm to blow and the waves rolled up as high as the vessels' topmasts. In the height of the hurricane the God of the Wind—who is mightier than men—lifted up the two giant vessels of the white men and tossed them on to the rocks on the shore, just as easily as he tosses coconuts down from the palms. Feeling that the great canoes were their rightful property, having been cast upon

the land that was theirs from the beginning of time, they advanced to take possession of what the God of the Wind had so thoughtfully sent them. But as they approached the stranded vessels the white men inside them blew fire out of tubes, and many of the black men were killed by the mysterious power in the hands of the white men. So the black men withdrew, and at night flames from many fires could be seen on the beach and in the jungle, and the chant of war songs and the tom-tom of the drums could be heard. The black men waited with the patience that was their natural heritage, and after a few nights had passed the God of the Wind caused the sea to rise in fury against the white men, and one of their great canoes presently began to grind to pieces on the reef, and as its men, to save their lives, took to the small boats, the black men waited for them on the shore and slew them in vengeance for their fire-tubes. But the other canoe of the white men was not so hated by the God of the Wind, for he treated it more gently by driving it upon the beach and letting it rest there almost undamaged. In gratitude for their safe deliverance the white men in her did not pour out fire from their tubes, but came out on the beach and made friendly signs to the black men. And though each mistrusted the other a little at first, black and white were soon mutually bartering their goods and growing as near friends as people whose ways are different can ever be. Beads of pearl, necklaces, and ornaments of shell, axes and arrowheads of stone, spears and shields of wood were exchanged for cotton, cheap knives, iron pots, and coloured handkerchiefs. Thus did a little tact and sympathy bring out the best in men, as it always does. Nor did the white men betray their black friends, and so the mutual trust increased until the white men grew almost happy on their sylvan beach. But every man longs for his own land when he is away from it, especially if there are many difficulties in the way of his

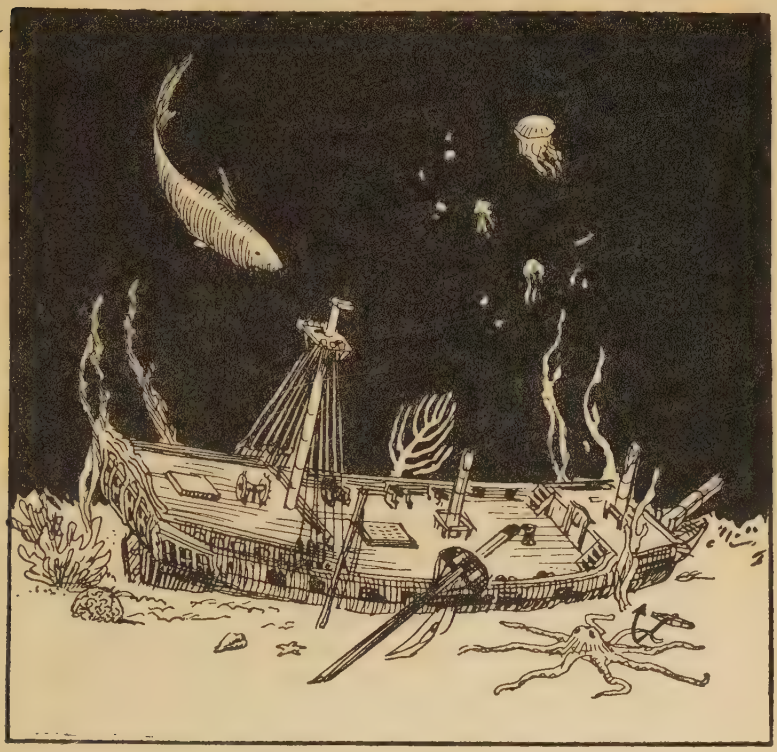
return, and the black men made no objection when their white friends began building a boat in which to sail away to their own country. When, after many months, the boat was finished, as it was not large enough to take them all, a number of them remained behind when the others sailed away with promises that when they reached some harbour where they could find a ship they would send for their comrades. And so the men left on the island of Vanikoro settled down to wait for the rescue that never came, for presumably the little boat that was built on the beach and launched with such great hopes did not survive the seas it met with somewhere after leaving the island. And now the natives at Tucopia told the listening Dillon that they had heard that there were some aged white men living at Vanikoro who were the last survivors from the great canoes. This story brought to Dillon's mind the mystery of the two ships from France that had disappeared many years before, and, having a tenacious nature, he gradually reconstructed the whole story until he felt he had hit upon the solution that had exercised men's minds for so many years. Being his own master, he set sail for the island whence came this romantic tale, to see for himself if any of the survivors lived, if indeed the *Astrolabe* and the *Boussole* were the ships that had been driven ashore there.

After setting a course for Vanikoro, Captain Dillon found his vessel in such an unseaworthy condition that he sailed for his original destination, Calcutta, and on arriving there promptly communicated the news to the Government offices. The matter was soberly discussed between the impulsive, energetic Irishman, eager to be in action, and the calmer, judicial mind of the officials, and in the end that powerful organization, the Honourable East India Company, decided to lend the enterprising and sanguine Dillon one of their vessels to go to Vanikoro and find out if any Frenchmen were marooned among the natives there,

and also to discover any evidence to cast light on the fate of the two lost frigates. Dillon left Calcutta early in 1827 in command of the small Indiaman *Research*, and after some delay at a port of call in Australia through a legal dispute between Dillon and his surgeon, he arrived after a voyage of many months at the palm-fringed island of Vanikoro. The next day the *Research* let go her anchor in the clear water outside the breakers and proceeded to send a boat ashore. The natives were now friendly, and gave all the information they could to assist Dillon in his search. On the island he found overwhelming evidence that the two wrecked vessels were those of La Pérouse, and he was able to carry on board the *Research* many relics of the wrecked frigates. Only recently the writer has made a visit to the Louvre in Paris, where he has seen these very relics that Dillon collected from the natives. There are cannon-balls, chain swivels, iron pots, cutlasses, and so forth, all badly corroded with long submersion in sea-water. No doubt many visitors who pass through the halls of the Marine Museum give the most casual glance at the blackened relics, without realizing that those objects are part of the evidence that solved the most puzzling sea mystery of the eighteenth century.

The story that the natives on Vanikoro told Dillon was substantially the same that he had heard the previous year when at the island of Tucopia. They glossed over the account of the death of the first ship's crew, but Dillon listened to their story without comment. He was here for evidence, not for quarrels (though he was a quarrelsome man), and evidence he got. The natives spoke of the friendliness of the other crew, and told how they had built a boat in which some had sailed away, and how the others who had remained behind all died natural deaths. This latter point they insisted upon with a certain *naïveté*, as if they expected not to be believed.

From Vanikoro the *Research* sailed to neighbouring islands in search of further relics of the *Astrolabe* and the *Boussole*, and though he heard many tales of the lost white men Dillon was told nothing that added materially to what



he had already heard. Meanwhile, the French Government had sent out another frigate to search the islands in quest of the fate of La Pérouse, and while this ship was sailing to Vanikoro, Dillon was on the way back to Calcutta with his relics. However quarrelsome and unpopular a man Dillon seems to have been, he certainly accomplished what he set out to do. He was a man who knew his own mind, and one feels that he earned the reward that was

bestowed upon him when he arrived in Paris to present the relics to the French Government. He was made a member of the Legion of Honour, and it is said that he received from King Charles X an annuity, which must have been very pleasant to the hard-bitten old seaman. The only thing that remains to be told is that D'Urville, the French commander who had been sent out to find out all he could about the lost frigates, succeeded in discovering the exact position of one of the sunken ships, where her ribs could be seen encrusted with shells and coral down in the clear water. And lying among the bones of the frigate he saw guns, cannon-balls, an anchor, and some ironwork that had fallen away from the rotted timbers. The waving ribbons of seaweed grew among the wreckage, and brilliant-hued fish glided over the grave of the once beautiful ship. So the forty-year-old mystery of the lost frigates was cleared up for ever.

The coming of wireless telegraphy has snatched away the veil of mystery that once surrounded all ships when at sea. When they had dropped the land astern after leaving port their movements were utterly unknown (except on occasions when they spoke another ship) until they reached their port of destination. When they had weighed anchor and stood out to sea, and the last good-byes were said by the passengers, the ship became a self-contained entity, an independent planet whose void was the boundless sea ; and if anything happened to her to cause her to founder in mid-ocean there were no magic electric waves to send out " S.O.S." and bring hurrying to the spot all the shipping within a thousand miles. Hence the likelihood of fresh sea mysteries in these modern times is rare. The *Waratah*, it is true, sailed within the era of wireless, but in those early days of the invention it had not been made compulsory aboard merchant ships.

Just on the northern edge of what has come to be known as the Atlantic steamer track, in the vicinity of that large area of comparatively shallow water called the Grand Banks, at certain times of the year drift masses of ice which have come down from the North and are fast melting away in the warmer waters of the Gulf Stream. Icebergs alone are a dire menace to shipping, but when they are adrift in sea mists and fogs they constitute the worst peril sea-captains

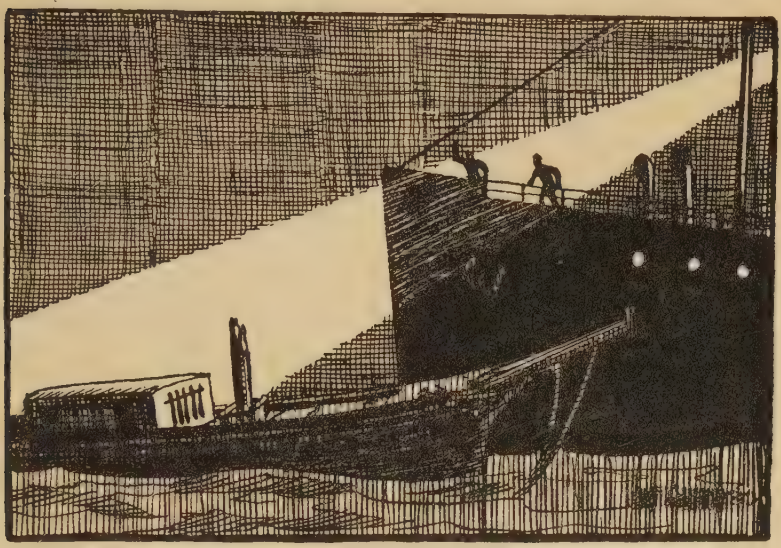
have to face. And it so happens that where the ice drifts in warm latitudes it is usually foggy. The Atlantic packets, or Western Ocean packets, as sailors called them, had to navigate through, or very close to, the ice-fields off the Grand Banks, because that happens to be the shortest way to New York. So it is pretty certain that the mystery of lost ships in the North Atlantic during packet-ship days finds its solution in the one significant word 'ice.' Ice destroyed the *Titanic*, and undoubtedly ice played the villain's part in most of those tragic dramas. The number of fine and well-found ships that have disappeared in the Atlantic without leaving a clue as to how they were lost is really remarkable. Certainly bottles containing messages

purporting to be from foundered ships have been picked up months, or even years, after the event has happened. But bottle messages are not conclusive evidence of the fate of the ship, because it is a device that so easily lends itself to practical jokers with a morbid turn of mind. After the *President* failed to reach port several bottle messages were found on the coasts of Ireland and England, but they all bore the suspicious appearance of fakes. The only proven authentic case of a bottle message that occurs to me is the message Major Macgregor put in a bottle when the *Kent* was on fire, and which was subsequently washed up on the Barbadoes and sent to the Major, who, contrary to his expectations at the time, had survived the disaster.

Among sea mysteries for which the North Atlantic is responsible was the disappearance of the Allan Line steamer *Huronian*, which simply vanished into the unknown some time during the month of February 1902. She left Glasgow for St John's, Newfoundland, on February 11, commanded by Captain John Brodie, and somewhere between these two ports the sea swallowed up this 4500-ton vessel and all of her crew. She was a new ship, having been in commission only six months, and was perfectly sound when she sailed. The usual search was made; for weeks cruisers and scouts combed the waters of the steamer track, but nothing was found to show how the ship had been lost. Then came the stories of messages found in bottles, and as two of the messages agreed on one point—on telling the manner in which the ship sank—there is a probability that they were genuine. In both cases they definitely indicated that the *Huronian* capsized, which, though quite possible,

has never been proved. But one of the weak points in the authenticity of messages found in bottles washed ashore is that when a ship is rapidly sinking it is not in human nature calmly to write a message and, carefully sealing it in a bottle, to throw it overboard.

Another Western Ocean mystery was the disappearance of the *Pacific*, in 1856. She was an American ship built



for the New York–Liverpool service, and had not been long in commission when she disappeared. In 1856, somewhere between Liverpool and New York she was lost, with one hundred and eighty passengers and crew. She did not appear at Liverpool at the expected time, and though other ships' captains were instructed to search for her not a stick was ever found to explain her disappearance. But the mystery of her loss is probably explained by ice—the culprit in so many other deep-sea tragedies.

In 1898 Captain Joshua Slocum set sail from a New England port in the 12-ton yawl *Spray* on a voyage round

the world. He sailed the whole distance alone, and to a certain extent set the fashion in this form of adventure, *i.e.*, navigating the world in small craft. Jack London and company attempted it in the *Snark*, Captain Voss succeeded in the canoe *Tilikum*, and a number of others, tiring of the artificialities of civilization and craving for the open sea and sky, have made long voyages in small fore-and-aft vessels. The Atlantic was crossed in a tiny craft

called the *Nautilus* forty or fifty years ago, and it has been crossed many times since, one of the latest to make the passage being Alain Gerbault, sailing alone in the little yawl *Firecrest* from Nice to New York.

All these sea-venturers, with the exception of the first-named, have come through their experience without fatal mishap; but Captain Slocum, after safely completing his voyage round the world without a shipmate, ventured to sea again in the *Spray* and was never heard of after. Nothing was found to explain his disappearance, and the fate of Captain Slocum has remained a mystery ever since.

Another and more recent sea mystery is the loss of the *Liev Eiriksson* and her crew in the Arctic in the summer of 1924. On July 4 of that year William Washburn

Nutting, Commodore of the Cruising Club of America, and Arthur Sturgis Hildebrand left Bergen, Norway, to follow the Viking trail across the Atlantic to America. With them were John Todahl of New York and Bj. Fleischer of Norway, both keen yachtsmen. The *Liev Eiriksson* was a small double-ended cutter, or *skoite*, of typical Norwegian design, 42 feet long, strongly built and well fitted for sailing among ice.

Leaving Bergen, the adventurers reached Reykjavik, the capital of Iceland, on July 25 after calling at the Faroe Islands on the way. About the same time another party of Americans had also left Norway, Mr De Witt Wells with his son, a friend, and the crew, in the teakwood yawl *Shanghai*, bound for Iceland and the United States. But the *Shanghai* was wrecked in a bad gale on the Canadian coast, and the party barely escaped with their lives, so that what might have been an ocean race was never concluded because both parties met with disaster.

Nutting and Hildebrand wrote letters while at Reykjavik, which in due course reached their destinations, and these letters told the future plans of the voyagers. They announced the date of their departure for Greenland as August 10, and spoke of having heard that the ice was very thick off that coast to the south. They would not attempt to land anywhere on Greenland, but expected to make their first anchorage at Battle Harbour, Labrador, somewhere about September 15. However, after leaving the Icelandic capital the *Liev Eiriksson* did touch at the small harbour of Julianehaab, Greenland, on September 8, and after a few hours' stay left for Battle Harbour. Mr Fleischer, the Norwegian member of the party, posted a letter at the Greenland station which eventually reached Bergen. After that no further news was ever received from the party. The men and boat were swallowed up in a mystery that can only be explained by the ice and the sea;

and until the sea gives up its dead the manner of their fate will never be known.

Early in October friends and relatives of the party began to grow anxious at the absence of news, and bestirred

themselves to make every possible inquiry to cast light on the mystery. The wireless was enlisted in their aid, messages were sent to remote stations on the Labrador coast, and by request the U.S. Navy Department dispatched the cruiser *Trenton* to search the seas between Labrador and Greenland for the missing yacht. Everything within reason was done to find the lost party, the *Trenton* cruising for

twelve days and covering 4100 miles of sea in her search. Advertisements were inserted in American and European newspapers, but they brought no information of a helpful nature, and after several weeks the search was abandoned. Nutting, Hildebrand, Todahl, and Fleischer had joined the great company of lost sailors.

CHAPTER XII

The "Flying Dutchman" : Whale Stories : Sea-serpents and other Superstitions

WHO can deny that mythical personage, the "Flying Dutchman," a right to be called one of the mysteries of the sea? His name is familiar enough, but how few know his history! Vanderdecken—*der fliegende Holländer*, as the Germans call him—is a name that conjures up phantom ships, the ghosts of dead sailors, storms, and evil spirits. And whether Vanderdecken ever lived or not, there is a certain air of mystery about him that admits him into any company that is concerned with the Unknown. So let us consider him as a person to be reckoned with seriously and examine his story from the beginning until the time when his ghost was left to haunt the seas even unto this day.

Less than a century ago the Flying Dutchman was accepted by all sailors as a very real ghost—for ghost he was admitted to be—who haunted the seas round the Cape of Good Hope, condemned for mortal sin to beat off the land for ever. When the arrival of steam pushed sailing-ships off the seas it swept away many ancient usages and beliefs, and among the company of mariners' ghosts flying before the advance of modern scepticism we sêe Vanderdecken, his cloak flapping in the wind, leading the long procession.

When Coleridge wrote *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* the seamen of his day were steeped in superstition, and believed in cabalistic signs and charms to ward away evil. Indeed, so strongly was superstition engrained in the minds and hearts of the old sailors that many of the ancient beliefs survive in the iron 'glory holes' of steamers to this day. The modern sailor, especially in the Mediterranean (I speak of the European seaboard), still has his private doubts as to the wisdom of sailing on Friday, and his views of the virtues of having a black cat aboard, and will still paint the sign of Solomon on the rudder-head or the freeboard as a charm against the danger of storms at sea.

The Vanderdecken legend, the theme of which is literally eternal punishment for those who defy the Supreme Being, has, like most old legends, a moral warning as its basis. As with the story of the Holy Grail, there are many versions differing only in detail, but keeping intact the main idea—in the case of the Flying Dutchman, that of a phantom ship and a captain damned to sail on for ever. The French and Spanish peoples had their versions of the tale, and so, too, had the Germans and the Danes. In each there is a phantom ship sailing under a terrible curse, and frequently the likeness of Vanderdecken, under another name, stands, legs apart, upon the quarterdeck defying the thunder and lightning. Vanderdecken is the marine counterpart of the Wandering Jew; they are both cursed to a deathless life. Though usually known as a Dutchman, he is recognized in different versions as a German, a Frenchman, or an Englishman. If, indeed, we include all the phantom-ship legends, Vanderdecken takes in turn the nationality of almost every country on earth. The Germans have a similar character in one Falkenberg, a nobleman who, in

a fit of passion, killed his brother and his bride, and for his sin was condemned to wander for ever. Coming to the seashore, he found a man awaiting him in a boat to take him aboard a phantom ship, where he lingers to this day while demons play dice for his soul. His ship is still said to be seen in the North Sea. It carries no crew, but flames shoot from its mast-head at night, by which other ships may recognize it.

The typical version of the tale is that the captain was, as his name suggests, a Dutchman, and a man who feared neither God nor the devil. He commanded a merchantman which, while on a voyage to the Indian Ocean, ran into such head-winds in the latitude of the Cape of Good Hope (well named the Cape of Storms) that the ship was nearly dismasted. The crew, becoming alarmed at the violence of the wind and sea, begged the captain to turn and run before it and give up the mad intention of trying to round the Cape in such weather. But Vanderdecken was not a man easily moved, and he held stubbornly to his course, all the while singing and drinking and blaspheming. The ship in the meantime was in a sad plight, with her spars smashed and her rigging hanging in a tangle of gear and broken cordage. Then, when the storm had lasted for many days and Vanderdecken still persisted in trying to beat against it, the clouds opened and the Supreme Being came down from heaven and stood in dazzling light upon the poop of the wretched ship. The crew and passengers fell upon their knees in pious respect, but Vanderdecken stood up and demanded what business the Vision had upon his quarterdeck. And the Vision spake, and said, "You should turn back, Captain Vanderdecken. I am mightier than you and it will ill profit you to defy Me." Vanderdecken's only reply was to curse and blaspheme, and—so they say—to attempt to shoot the Being that stood before him. But the bullet had no effect, and Vanderdecken felt a hideous

sensation of helplessness come over him, as if he was bound with strong chains, and he perforce had to stand mute and

listen to the Heavenly Being. "For your evil nature," It spake, "and for defying Me, you shall henceforth be condemned to sail the seas for ever alone, except for your

cabin-boy, who shall attend you, and he shall change into a demon, and the food he shall bring you each day shall be bitter and uneatable. And you shall have to stand all watches, day in and day out, for ever without rest. And your ship will be an evil phantom which shall haunt the seas and bring disaster to all who meet with it."

Then the Voice ceased and the Vision disappeared, and Vanderdecken gave a sneer as he turned round to look at his crew. But the crew and passengers had gone, and he was alone except for an evil-looking creature that stood near and in whom he recognized his erstwhile cabin-boy.

Like most ancient legends it has a touch of barbaric cruelty that disturbs our modern notions of fairness and merciful dealing. We wonder why the cabin-boy should have to share the fate of Vanderdecken, and why, too, innocent mariners should for ever be haunted by the phantom ship, the sight of which would bring them misfortune. But we must accept the legend as it stands, with all its ancient notions of the wisdom of divine vengeance. Through the centuries the early tale became added to by imaginative seamen, sitting in the fo'c'sle yarning, until the original legend is embroidered with a *naïve* unconscious humour. It is said, for instance, that when Vanderdecken sees a mortal ship—or its crew see him—the drinking-water is turned bad and all the food is changed into beans, the sailor's pet aversion! It is also said that he can change the appearance of his ship, and that he has a playful way of sending letters aboard other ships to be posted, with the plea that he cannot get home to post them himself. Anyone who tries to see what the letter contains will be pursued by ill-fortune.

Though this story is altogether too fantastic for our modern intelligence, it is practically certain that the story is founded on fact. Some time about three hundred years ago, when the tale originated, there was probably a Dutch East Indiaman lost in mysterious circumstances—disappear-

ing without leaving a trace of ship or crew behind. The vessel may have last been seen beating off the Cape of Good Hope, and when it failed to appear in the course of time its fate may have been discussed in sea-port taverns, and in the dark fo'c'sles of ships when the watch was over.

VANDERDECKEN

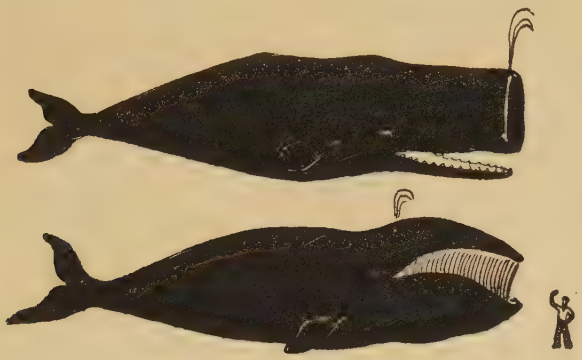
And in those superstitious days, when the sea beyond the horizon was supposed to be haunted by fabulous monsters, many a sailor might have thought he had seen a phantom ship when at night, in bad weather, a thunderbolt lighted up the blackness and discovered for the briefest instant the faintly outlined shape of another vessel labouring in the heavy seas. Many an ancient mariner must have mistaken a real ship for a ghost, and he would lose no time in telling

his mates of the apparition. Certainly it is true that, in quite modern times, perfectly sober and well-balanced ships' masters have brought back stories of having seen the Flying Dutchman. In the lack of contrary evidence one cannot accuse them of drawing the long-bow, though one wonders if it was not a mirage that was seen, for mirages occur at sea just as on land.

Although Jonah is said to have been swallowed by a whale, or by a large sea animal presumed to have been a whale, there are many people nowadays who seem to think that it is impossible for a whale to swallow anything so large as a man's body, and they quote something they have read about the whale's gullet being so small that it can only swallow the tiny animal life of the sea known as 'plankton.' Yet other people will tell of having heard of a giant cetacean giving battle to an enormous squid—one of the octopus family—and, after vanquishing the foe, swallowing him without difficulty. There seem to be so many legends about whales that there has grown round them a mystery which can be fairly included among the mysteries of the sea. But the mystery is not difficult to explain, for the simple truth is that the sperm whale, or cachalot, can swallow a man quite easily. But most types of the great family of Cetacea have throats much too small to permit the passage of anything bigger than a small fish, a fact which explains the common rumour that the whale cannot swallow a man.

The family of Cetacea is a large one with about eighty species, and at its head is the patriarch cachalot, or sperm whale. Important members of his family are the right whale, the fin-back, and the hump-back, down to the narwhal and the porpoise, all differing from fish in the fact that they are warm-blooded animals, do not spawn, and, unlike true fish, cannot breathe under water. To the whaleman the cachalot is the most important member of

his tribe. The amount of oil he yields is vastly greater than that from any other of the whale family. He will reach 70 feet in length and give ninety barrels of oil. On the other hand, he does not possess the valuable fringe called whalebone which distinguishes the right whales. And it is in this difference that the interest of the mystery of a whale's 'swallow' lies. The purpose of the fringe of whalebone that hangs from the upper jaw of the right



THE TWO MAIN TYPES OF WHALES
Above, the sperm whale, or cachalot; below, the right whale

whale is to serve as a sieve when the animal is feeding. The food of the right whales, though minute in size, is highly nutritious and swarms in immense shoals in the seas frequented by these whales. The latter swims along with its vast cavern of a mouth open, scooping in several hogsheads of sea-water, which it then drains out by raising its head above the sea. But the fringe of whalebone hanging down from the upper jaw makes a strong sieve which holds back the small crustaceans as the water cascades out of the whale's mouth, and he is then ready to swallow his strange meal. Now cousin cachalot has entirely different ideas about feeding. To begin with, he is a fellow of different temper from his more timid relative, and he seeks battle with the giant cuttle-fish and squid, which he devours,

taking huge bites, frequently larger than a man's body. Many whalemen have seen these fierce battles at sea between a whale and a squid, but the cachalot has always been victorious over his hideous prey. And the size of these monster squids is shown by the pieces of tentacles of the diameter of a barrel which are often found in a dead whale's stomach.

And now comes a story about a sailor having been swallowed by a whale and yet living to tell the story. It sounds incredible, absurd, and fantastic; but its truth has been vouched for. Sir Francis Fox, the engineer, relates [1] the experience of this modern Jonah as told him by a friend whose integrity is unquestionable. This friend, the Rev. D. Calman (one perceives the reverend man's interest), discussed the matter of Jonah and the size of a whale's throat with the manager of a whaling-station, who was quite positive in his assertions that a whale could swallow a man. And in support of his belief he told of having found in a whale's stomach the skeleton of a 16-foot shark. He also said that the throat of a sperm whale can take pieces of food 8 feet in diameter. Then followed the remarkable account of the American whaleman who lived a day inside a whale's stomach and was recovered alive. The American whaler *Star of the East* raised a big cachalot off the Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic,[2] a favourite whaling-ground. The whale was harpooned after some trouble, and during the excitement of dispatching the animal one of the men, James Bartley, went overboard and was given up for lost. A big whale is an exceedingly valuable catch, and, in the need for getting it to the ship and its blubber aboard, all thought of the lost whaleman was banished. Once alongside a ship a whale is stripped of its blubber as quickly as possible, the men working in constant shifts until the greasy labour is finished. They worked the rest of that day and during the night until

[1] In *Sixty-three Years of Engineering*.

[2] February 1891.

morning, when a tackle was made fast to the whale's stomach and it was hoisted aboard. The stomach of a cachalot, it may be said, is usually examined in search of that precious substance 'ambergris,' which is worth its weight in gold. When the unsavoury-looking mass of the stomach was hoisted on deck its folds spasmodically moved as if there was some living creature therein, and the whalemen lost no time in investigating the cause of the mysterious movement. When the stomach was opened the body of a man doubled up and unconscious was found, and it proved to be the missing James Bartley. It is not a pleasant story, and we need not linger over the unwholesome details of it. There is plenty of convincing evidence in the account to point to its authenticity; but it is of a nature more suited to a treatise on physiology. Bartley recovered consciousness, though he was delirious for two weeks. When he became lucid enough to relate his experience he told of remembering being thrown out of the boat and slipping into a smooth passage which seemed to move and carry him forward, and how he presently noticed he had more room. The rest may be omitted except to say that Bartley told of the terrible heat in the living whale, and how he found he could breathe, as a certain amount of air found its way into the animal's stomach. Bartley completely recovered from his terrible ordeal, but his skin was bleached to a deadly whiteness, nor did it ever recover its natural colour. And this, we may add, is only one of many stories of men being swallowed by whales, though no other account relates that the victim was afterward recovered alive.

Superstitions, ghosts, and fabulous monsters die a harder death at sea than on land. Sailors are a less sophisticated race than landsmen, and far more ready to take a story at its face value than are their brothers ashore. From the days

when reed-boats plied upon the Nile men have beguiled the hours at sea recounting stories to their mates, and a good teller of tales is always sure of an audience at sea. Hence, into the true yarns that have been told in the fo'c'sles of ships there has gradually filtered, through the agency of merry fellows with lively imaginations, such improbable embroidery as to put the stories into the category of fiction. But most legends have had a beginning in actual experience. The mythical creatures of the sea had their origin in something actually seen. The sea-serpent, as old sailors imagined it to be, probably never existed, yet every little while a sea-serpent is reported to have been seen by sane men. Perhaps a basking shark or a long string of seaweed, floating spars, or a line of porpoises jumping out of the sea in single file, would create the illusion of a sea-serpent to distant watchers. The Vikings firmly believed in sea-serpents, and named some of their larger ships *snekkjas*, or snake-ships, and adorned the big square sail they carried with a representation of a great sea-serpent twisted into many coils and stretching the full width of the sail. And so firmly rooted in the peasant mind is this belief in sea-serpents that many people of the Norwegian fjords of the present day claim to have seen sea-serpents. Off Molde, Norway, a captain in the Norwegian navy, and six seamen who were rowing his boat at the time, saw a great serpent swimming on the surface of the water between their boat and the land. The captain took his gun and fired at the monster, which at once sank beneath the sea, leaving on the surface of the water a spreading stain of crimson. The captain and his men described the serpent as swimming with an undulating motion and showing above the surface of the sea about eight arches of its body. Its head, which was plainly seen, was described as something like the head of a horse, grey in colour and having a long fringe like a mane on the crest of its back.

Off the New England coast many sea-serpents are said to have been seen during the last hundred years. Near Cape Ann, Massachusetts, in 1817, a dozen people claimed to have seen a huge animal like a snake swimming in the sea not far from the shore. Indeed, it came so close that they were able to notice its details. This serpent was brown in colour except underneath, which was white. It was judged to be about 60 feet long, and in appearance had a typical snake's head. This story strikes one as being more probable than the account of the Molde serpent, because if there are such denizens of the sea it is reasonable to assume that they would resemble a snake rather than a horse, for there are in some parts of the world types of sea-snakes similar to the water-snakes found in lakes and ponds. And it would not be putting an undue strain on the imagination to credit the existence of huge serpents living in the depths of the ocean. Certainly it cannot be proved that sea-serpents do not exist, and until it is proved to the contrary these creatures can still be classed among the mysteries of the sea.

There are many natural phenomena, such as phosphorescence seen in the sea at night and the luminous ball of light on the yard-arms and at the mast-heads of ships during an electrical storm, which have mystified landsmen and sailors and given rise to legends and beliefs about them that are more romantic than true. The ancient seafarers, for instance, said that the points of light just under the surface of the water where the sea was phosphorescent were the jewels sparkling in the mermaids' hair; and that the ball of light on the yard-arms during a storm was the spirit body of St Elmo, hence the name *Corpo Santo*, or corposant, as it was often called. It was also called by mariners of different countries and different eras St Helme, St Elmo's fire, or Jack-a-Lantern, while the whalers called it

'ampizant' and thought it to be the spirit of a dead sailor come aboard his old ship. Columbus in his journal speaks of seeing the body of St Elmo "with seven lighted candles in the round top, and there followed a mighty rain and thunder." His sailors sang litanies and prayers when the light appeared, because mariners have always known that the appearance of St Elmo's light at the mast-head or at the end of the yard-arm preceded a storm. And storms at sea five hundred years ago were such a serious matter in the cranky, open-decked ships of the time that we do not wonder at the sailors praying when they saw the corposant at the mast-head. Old stories of the sea are full of references to St Elmo's fire. Dampier, Hakluyt, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, and most of the old navigators frequently referred to this natural phenomenon, to which they attributed miraculous powers. Some wiseacre at a later date thought it a brilliant phosphorescent 'jelly' clinging to the rigging and the masts, though he could not explain how it got there. Without being too scientific in defining the mysterious light, it can be briefly explained as electrical energy made luminous, and therefore visible, in the rarefied air during or before a storm. It would naturally be attracted to the iron parts of a ship.

There is a legend in Brittany about the origin of St Elmo's light that is as ingenuous as it is romantic. It tells how, during a storm, the captain of a Breton vessel saw a shipwrecked man floating in the sea, and, ordering the ship to be hove to, he rescued the man, who was still alive. When the stranger had recovered from the effects of the hardships from which he had suffered and was clothed in a new suit of the captain's, he disclosed the fact that he was St Elmo and asked if there was anything he could do to show his gratitude to his rescuer. The latter, being an honest man, replied, "You owe me nothing. I only did what any man would do." Whereupon St Elmo pondered

awhile and then said, " In gratitude for your service to me I will render a service to you and to all sailors to come in the future. When a storm is approaching I will send a warning light, in order that you may reef your sails and get your ship snug and tight, so that when the storm comes upon you you will weather it safely." And so ever after that, when a storm approached, a ball of light glowed at the yard-arm or on the mast-head, and sailors came to name this light after St Elmo, who sent it.

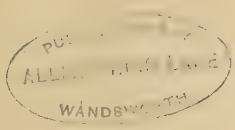
The greatest mystery of the sea to the ancients was the Lost Continent of Atlantis, another tale too improbable to be credited by the modern mind. It is perhaps too obviously a piece of mythology to be rightly included among a collection of actual experiences, though no more improbable than the legend of St Elmo.

Atlantis was a legendary island in the Atlantic Ocean, opposite the Straits of Gibraltar. It was said to be the home of the Sea God, from whose son, Atlas, it took its name. Plato wrote of it as being larger than Libya and Asia Minor together. At one time, many thousand years before the coming of Greek civilization, it had been a powerful kingdom, with a vast army that had conquered nearly all the Ancient World. This great kingdom had disappeared by sinking into the sea, so the ancients thought. Plato further describes how Atlantis had been an ideal commonwealth where every man was content. There are numerous traditions about the continent, and the legend probably gave rise to the stories of the Fortunate Isles and the Great Isles of the Blest. Atlantis was, in fact, the traditional Utopia, an earthly paradise, and up to the fifteenth century it was drawn in the maps of the world. It may have been one of the Canaries or Azores, or even in the West Indies. From time to time a serious investigator appears with a new theory to explain the legend of the lost continent, and at least we can accept the suggestion

of islands separated from the mainland by volcanic action or sunk below the sea through the same cause. This is a geological phenomenon that has occurred in the Pacific within our time. The captain and crew of an Arctic sealer, while on a cruise along the coast of Alaska a few years ago, actually saw an island come into being before their eyes.

With a safe offing they watched the turmoil on the surface of the sea, as lava and volcanic ash were belched up from a submarine volcano. The surface of the sea was covered with clouds of steam for miles, and when it finally evaporated there lay an island. A hot and steamy piece of land, to be sure, but an island for all that. Surrounding its shores the sea was in a constant turmoil of boiling and steaming, while above the low black mass of lava hung a plume of smoke arising from its heated surface. Some photographs were taken, and the vessel proceeded on its way. A few weeks or months later the ship returned by the place, but the island was gone. The sea had swallowed it up as suddenly as it had given it birth.

PART V
PIRATES AND TREASURE-SHIPS



THE CHASE

CHAPTER XIII

Buccaneers and Pirates

BETWEEN the terms 'buccaneer' and 'pirate' is a difference that William Dampier would say is like the difference between an honest man and a thief. Perhaps so, but the dividing line between them was frequently as thin as that fine shade of distinction between 'pirate' and 'privateer.' Privateers were nothing better than licensed pirates, though at times it may shock our conception of such fine seamen as Drake, Hawkins, and Anson to hear that the Spaniards, at least, unhesitatingly denounced them as pirates. One of the most magnificent triumphs of the early navigators was Drake's voyage round the world in the *Pelican*, but it was probably inspired by no higher aim than to attack Spanish ships. The audacity and high courage of Drake and his resolution to win through at whatever hazard gain our admiration and respect, but it cannot blind us to the fact that he sailed up the South American coast plundering rich galleons. The privateer carried a letter of marque, a licence if you will, authorizing the holder to capture and plunder all vessels deemed to belong to countries nominally or actually enemies. The temptation to abuse such a freedom of power was very great, and it frequently was abused. It was but one step

into piracy, as the histories of famous pirates show. To his victims the captain with a letter of marque was a pirate, to men of his race he was a hero.

Reverting to the terms 'buccaneer' and 'pirate,' the early life of William Dampier, navigator, one-time buccaneer and pirate, gives us the clear distinction between two somewhat muddy occupations. Originally buccaneers were not pirates, the word referring to the bands of wild adventurers who hunted the enormous herds of wild cattle on the island

of Santo Domingo. They cured the beef in their rough huts, called *boucans*. They were hunters and butchers, and were known as boucaneers or boucaniers, and their numbers were recruited from the outlaws and desperate characters on the Spanish Main. The tyrannical colonial policy of Spain at that time [1] aroused in the boucaneers, and those who traded in the Caribbean Sea, an intense hatred of everything Spanish. Thus the hunters of Santo Domingo varied their days by expeditions against Spanish settlements and shipping, until this sea-roving developed into a profitable business and the buccaneers became regular pirates in a sort of fraternity whose headquarters were on the small island of Tortuga, taken for that purpose in 1630.

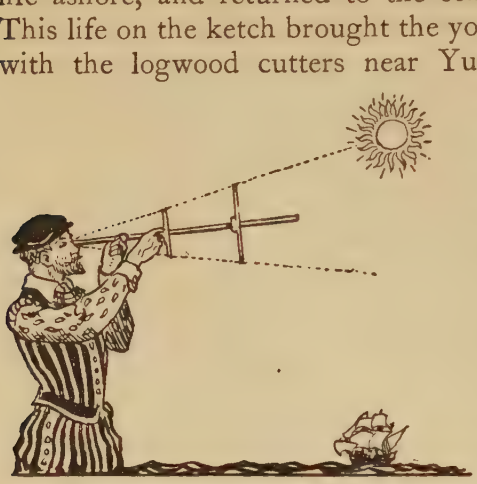
Spain soon began to pay for her unsympathetic treatment of her colonists, and for two centuries she suffered fabulous losses in men, ships, and bullion. Nearly all of this loss can be attributed to either pirates or privateers.

Although Dampier was in turn buccaneer, pirate, and privateer, by temperament he was as unlike a pirate as could be. Not fitted for heroic *rôles*, his was the nature of a student. Gifted with a scientific mind and a natural *flair* for navigation, as well as an inborn love of the sea and roving, he would have been among the greatest of explorers had it not been that he lacked the most necessary gift of all—the quality of leadership. His attempts at commanding expeditions were relative failures, and he was frequently glad to step down from the quarterdeck out of the limelight, to take his place among the men in the fo'c'sle, where there were no responsibilities to harass him. He had not the spirit and dash of a Drake or a Nelson, for although taking a prominent part in privateering ventures (*à la Draque*), his *rôle* in these actions was not always distinguished by excessive valour.

In his youth he made voyages to Newfoundland and the

[1] Early seventeenth century.

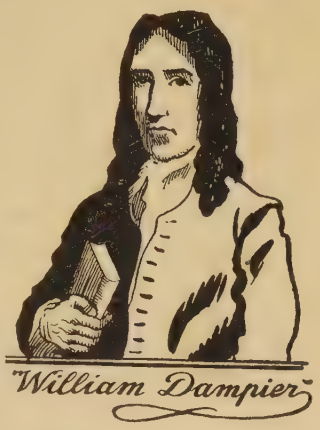
East Indies, but the beginning of his association with the buccaneers came at the early age of twenty-two, when he went to Jamaica as an assistant manager of a plantation. This was in 1674. He soon tired of the quiet plantation life ashore, and returned to the sea, on a trading ketch. This life on the ketch brought the young Dampier in touch with the logwood cutters near Yucatan, a band of ex-privateersmen living the rude life of half-tamed creatures in the most primitive conditions — a pretty company of rascals for the serious-minded Dampier to link his fortunes with. But that is exactly what he did, spending two years in their company, varying the work of logwood-cutting and hunting wild cattle with a little piracy as a side-line. At the end of the two years he returned to England, got married, and after a few months returned, without his lady, to Jamaica, ostensibly to rejoin his old friends the wood-cutters of Yucatan, but instead he linked his fortunes with a crew of *soi-disant* privateers bent on a piratical raid on that unhappy town of Porto Bello which figures in so many assaults from the pirates.



DRAKE USES THE CROSS-STAFF

The raid was successful, and, encouraged by this triumph, the pirate fleet sailed away in search of further victims. They presently fell upon the walled town of Panama, but finding the place impregnable, the buccaneers became disheartened and had to retire in mutinous rabble. After this they sailed southward and round the Horn into the Pacific, where Dampier remained with them, serving as a common

seaman until, after the most amazing adventures, he landed on the Isthmus of Panama at the head of forty men and crossed to the Atlantic side. Through all these difficult times Dampier contrived to keep a journal, which he carried safely in a hollow bamboo sealed at the ends with wax. It was from this remarkable diary that the material came for the very enthralling book published in London some years later. Once back in the Atlantic, or rather the Caribbean, he joined another pirate company and remained with them for a year, when he found employment with a Captain Cook, sailing with him on a privateering cruise in the latter's ship *Revenge*, of eighteen guns.



Our rather soiled hero, after spending some years of adventure all over the world, managed to get back to England by ignominiously stowing himself away on board an English ship. Thus, without a fanfare of trumpets, he returned to England on completing his first circumnavigation of the world. During the next six and a half years, which he spent in England, his famous journal was published as a book, and so popular did it at once become that it soon ran into several editions. In 1699 a second volume appeared, which contained, besides a narrative of some of his less dubious adventures, a very valuable scientific contribution called "A Discourse of Winds." This brought him to the notice of the Royal Society, and eventually led to his being appointed in January 1699 to the command of his Majesty's ship *Roebuck*, a 12-gun ship of 290 tons, for a voyage for scientific purposes to New Holland, *via* the Cape of Good Hope. The ship proved

to be rotten, and, under Dampier's poor leadership, discipline became lax and the crew grew mutinous. In spite of his troubles with ship and crew, he eventually brought the *Roebuck* round the Cape of Storms and up the Atlantic until the island of Ascension hove in sight. As by this time the ship was worn out and the pumps were no longer able to check the increasing leaks through her planking, she was run in toward the shore, but foundered before reaching the land, taking down with her most of Dampier's books and papers. The crew and their leader were rescued by an East Indiaman and taken to England.

The next year Dampier was chosen to command two ships on a cruise of the Pacific, as privateers against French and Spanish shipping in those waters. He had the *St George*, a ship of twenty-six guns, and the *Cinque Ports*, a galley of sixteen guns, and had orders to proceed to the River Plate and capture the treasure-galleons expected to be found there. The two vessels reached the coast of Brazil, their first objective, and there the captain of the *Cinque Ports* died, one Thomas Stradling being put in his place.

Dampier had quarrels with his crew while here, and there was so much bad blood that his lieutenant and eight men deserted him. After spending a month or two off the coast of Brazil, without seeing the galleons, Dampier sailed round the Horn and up to the island of Juan Fernandez, where another fierce quarrel broke out, this time between Dampier and Stradling, which resulted in the two ships parting company. The *Cinque Ports* sailed southward, and when they arrived at Juan Fernandez Stradling's mate, Alexander Selkirk, preferred to leave the ship and live as a marooned sailor sooner than remain longer in Stradling's company. He lived on this island more than four years before he was picked up by a visiting ship. It is this same Alexander Selkirk who is supposed to have inspired Defoe to write *Robinson Crusoe*.

Dampier had sailed northward accompanied by a prize, and off the coast of Mexico did a little business in attacking coasting craft and coast settlements while awaiting the arrival of a rich galleon from Manila. They presently fell in with the galleon, and after a blustering sort of fight Dampier's ship became so badly damaged that he had to withdraw. This action of Dampier's brought on his head the scornful censure of some of his crew, who eventually showed their dissatisfaction with their leader by taking the prize and sailing away in it. Left with but a handful of men and boys in a leaky, rotten ship, which later sank at her moorings, Dampier eventually returned to England with nothing to offer his owners for the loss of their vessel but a tale of adventure so stirring that his failure was forgiven by every one. Later we hear that he was presented to Queen Anne, and that lady was mightily entertained by the account of his voyages he related to her. So ended his second voyage round the world.

Despite his manifest faults, his reputation as a navigator was so great that in the year following his return to England Dampier was chosen as pilot to the armed ship *Duke*, under Captain Woodes Rogers, which, in company with the ship *Duchess*, was sent out further to harass the Spanish sea trade. Leaving Cork in August 1708, the two ships stood for Cape Horn, which was not reached without the

loss of some of the crew through scurvy. In February 1709 they arrived off the island of Juan Fernandez, a spot which Dampier had many times visited on former voyages. Landing there, they found a wild man dressed in goat-skins, who proved to be no other person than Alexander Selkirk, whom Stradling had left there four years previously. So 'Robinson Crusoe' was rescued. The voyage from a financial point of view was highly successful, the aggressive *Duke* and *Duchess* being frequently in fights which gained for their owners loot to the tune of about £400,000. After a very profitable voyage the two ships, in company with a Spanish prize, crossed the Pacific, and sailing round the Cape of Good Hope, reached England in July 1711. Here Dampier's voyaging ended.

From the foregoing history it is plain that Dampier, navigator, explorer, and naturalist, was for some years a pirate, though a pirate with a flavour of his own. He was the melancholy pirate, so different from the boasting roisterers of his day. One cannot imagine William Dampier toasting damnation to his enemies or singing ribald ballads. He was quite the antithesis of Captain Bartholomew Roberts, that prince of pirates who died in his finest clothes, in the grand manner.

There were the king of pirates, Sir Henry Morgan, a rogue who did things in a big way, a man of vision; Roberts, a personality, with a strict code which he lived up to; Stede Bonnet, the mad major, a landlubber who went to sea; Captain Kidd, the misunderstood; L'Olonnois, the most diabolical; Captain England, the humane and weak; Captain Davis, the affable; Captain Misson, the unique; Blackbeard, the picturesque; and Le Grand, the pirate who knew when to stop. The last retired ashore and died in his bed like an honest man, whereas most of them, not knowing when to call a halt, had their careers cut short by a hempen noose. In this way ended Stede Bonnet,

Captain Vane, and Rackam—to name but three. Morgan, as becomes a man with a title, died with his boots off, and was buried with all marks of respect. On the other hand, Blackbeard and Bartholomew Roberts met an end which was more in keeping with their lives. They died fighting.

A pirate who would never have been a pirate at all had it not been for a combination of circumstances that was not of his direct seeking was Captain William Kidd. We spoke of him above as " misunderstood " because, according to tradition, Kidd was one of the bloodiest of pirates. He has been the sport of ballad-makers and story-tellers ever since he came to an ignominious end at Execution Dock, and has been painted as an arch-villain and a cruel monster. Actually he was a second-rate pirate, as a brief outline of his inglorious history will show.

He was originally a shipmaster, and an honest man, married and with a home in New York. In 1691 he was asked by the Governors of Massachusetts to punish or chase away pirates, then off the New England coast. Presumably he did this little business for them. At any rate, he was a man trusted by the Governors. Four years later we hear of him in London, master of the trading brig *Antigoa*. Here he was approached by the agents of the Earl of Bellamont to equip and arm a vessel to hunt the pirates off the American coast. Bellamont had received the appointment of Governor of New England, with special instructions to suppress these pirates. The Admiralty refused a naval rank to Kidd, but he was given letters of marque to sail as a privateer against French shipping, and, of course, to capture any pirates he might come across. A formal agreement was drawn up, and £6000 capital was subscribed. Bellamont and his friends would have a share in any plunder taken, one-tenth of which was to go to the Crown. On hearing of it Kidd refused to captain such an enterprise; but eventually he was won over by promises of

a share in the spoils. The ship chosen was the *Adventure Galley*, 287 tons. It was a hazardous enterprise, with a hard-bitten crew sailing on the understanding of no prizes, no pay. At first Kidd cruised among the West Indies; but, finding neither Frenchmen nor sea-rovers, he sailed across the Atlantic and into the Indian Ocean, possibly in search of the Red Sea pirates whose headquarters were at Madagascar. Nearly a year had gone by and no prizes had been taken. The crew were growing desperate, and Kidd became anxious. His aristocratic partners must be satisfied somehow. In the meantime disaffection had been increasing among the crew, and during a quarrel with his gunner, one Moore, Kidd struck him on the head with a bucket so heavily that the man died the next day. There followed another six months of cruising, during which time Kidd's moral fibre must have weakened considerably, for he started raiding small vessels, and then, under the pressure of circumstance, he made the grave mistake of attacking a large, Armenian-owned merchant ship, the *Quedagh Merchant*, with a valuable cargo on board. Taking her as a prize, he sailed in her, in company with the *Adventure Galley*, for Madagascar. On the way he captured a Portuguese ship. At Madagascar Kidd fraternized with the pirates there, the very men he had been sent out to capture. But, as he was hopelessly outnumbered, he no doubt felt that discretion was the better part, for no attempt was made to capture them.

News reached England that Kidd had turned pirate, and a price was put on his head. The Grand Mogul, an Indian ruler, had made a great stir about it, so it became doubly urgent to capture Kidd. After a chequered voyage he crossed the Atlantic once more. He landed at Oyster Bay, Long Island, and in the dead of night buried his treasure. From there he sent word of his arrival to Governor Bellamont through a New York lawyer, who was

to treat with the Governor for pardon. But Bellamont lured Kidd to Boston, where he was arrested. Apparently he was made a political issue of some importance. Certainly some one had to be a scapegoat, and Kidd was chosen for that office. Dead pirates tell no tales, and, as already stated, he was hanged at Execution Dock as a warning to all wicked men.

The lugubrious history of the unlucky Captain Kidd is in direct contrast to the life of that more fortunate pirate, the swashbuckling villain, Sir Henry Morgan, the terror of the West Indies and the ravager of Panama. His name conjures up visions of torture, rapine, and murder; of burning cities and scuttled ships; of galleons crammed with treasure; of chests full of plate, doubloons, moidores, and pistareens. He it was who took the fortified town of Porto Bello by storm, ravaged the coast of Cuba, and put to the sword whole cities if they failed to pay for their ransom. Holding a commission to carry on a legitimate warfare against the Spaniards, he so far exceeded his orders that he was sent home under arrest to answer for his misdeeds. Even in those licentious days he was rather too strong a dose for the politicians to swallow. But while in London he used all his craft to gain favour of King Charles II, and to such good purpose that in 1674 he returned to the West Indies as Lieutenant-Governor of Jamaica; and, as if to crown his audacity, he brought a knighthood with him. That blood-stained rascal, who had stolen and murdered on a grand scale, was now *Sir* Henry Morgan, if you please. But he could not behave himself, and in 1683 (a wonder

Sr HEN: MORGAN

he lasted so long!) in Jamaica he was suspended from all his offices.

Morgan was the most successful of all buccaneers, and he was one of the few of his kind who died peacefully. Quite a remarkable thing when one comes to think of it, for it was considered *de rigueur* for the best pirates to die with their boots on, though not always as gentlemen-adventurers should—fighting. Quite often a noose played a prominent part in the final drama, which was a pity, for courage always commands respect, and to die on one's own quarterdeck is to be preferred to dancing at the end of a cord.

When Morgan sacked Panama he is reputed to have carried away, in coin alone, a hundred thousand pieces of eight, and from his expedition to Maracaibo he returned with almost as much treasure as from the Panama affair; but it cost him a deal more trouble, for when he arrived at Maracaibo he found the place abandoned—the golden bird had flown—though he and his rabble searched the country taking prisoners. On the return they sank two Spanish ships and captured a third, to which Morgan transferred his flag. One sea adventure followed another, but his biggest exploit by far was the ferocious assault and sack of Panama. That terrible campaign of murder, ravage, and looting was not a sea adventure, however, as the famous march and attack all took place on land. Morgan died in 1688.

Captain Edward Teach, better known as Blackbeard, was a Bristol man renowned from boyhood for his boldness and courage. Like so many others, he started his free-booting life as a privateer, and took to honest piracy in 1716. From the first he had luck, capturing many prizes in the Atlantic. He had a mate, named Israel Hands, whose name was later used by Stevenson in *Treasure Island*. Teach was a cruel rogue, who thought nothing of marooning members of his crew on a barren islet of sand without food

or water. In his day pirates were granted the King's pardon if they returned their stolen goods and promised to sin no more, so that sometimes for a brief respite from being hunted a pirate would ask for the King's pardon, only to break parole later, when the spirit moved him. This Blackbeard did after enjoying the security of the amnesty for a while. During this period he took unto

BLACKBEARD

himself a wife, a girl of sixteen, whom he treated in a brutal fashion after the novelty had worn off. The Governor of North Carolina performed the marriage ceremony, though it was whispered that the young lady was Blackbeard's fourteenth wife. This tale, however, may have got about through the similarity of his nickname to that of the monster Bluebeard.

When Teach sailed forth again he terrorized the local shipping, but the people had little faith in appealing to their Governor, so they secretly sent a deputation to the Governor of Virginia, requesting his aid in exterminating the pirate. Two armed sloops, under Lieutenant Maynard,

were dispatched in great secrecy to capture the man who so disturbed the security of the colony. Blackbeard's ship was found anchored in the shallows of a river, where, after a desperate fight, during which many men were lost, his vessel was captured, he himself being killed in combat with Lieutenant Maynard. Maynard's cutlass broke, and one of his men saved his life by attacking Blackbeard. The latter stood his ground, fighting with great fury until he fell dead with twenty-five wounds in his body.

It is odd to think that some of Lieutenant Maynard's men went a-pirating themselves, after capturing one of the most notorious of pirates. These were brutal times, and as Maynard's sloop returned after the victory she bore at the end of her jib-boom the head of the pirate leader. Some of his crew were hanged, but Israel Hands was one to escape the gallows, he being ashore at the time of the fight, with a wounded leg received from Blackbeard in a playful mood. It happened that one night, while drinking in the cabin with Hands and two other men, Blackbeard cocked his pistol under the table and pulled the trigger, after blowing out the candle. Hands was shot through the knee, and in explanation of his conduct Blackbeard said that unless he killed one of his men occasionally they would forget who he was.

At another time, when affairs were particularly dull, he suggested to the crew that they make a little hell of their own and see who could bear it the longest. This particular hell was to go with a few others into the hold and stay there under closed hatches while buckets of brimstone and sulphur were burnt. When they were nearly suffocated, some began to cry out that they had had enough. It was Blackbeard who remained below the longest, and he came up mightily pleased that he had been the last to give in.

In personal appearance he made a sufficiently ferocious figure. His blue-black beard was plaited with ribbons, the plaits sometimes being carried over his ears. In a

fight he always wore six pistols—two lots of three, and he stuck lighted fuses under his hat when he wished to show off to his enemies. When asked by one of his men, before his last fight, whether, if anything happened to him, his wife knew where his money was buried, he replied that no one but himself and the devil knew where it was, and the longest liver would take all. He was a bully, treacherous, and cruel, and for this very reason he was the perfect pirate. Many people of his day thought he had secret dealings with Satan, and the story was told that on his ship the crew had noticed a man on board who was not one of them. Some days he would be seen among them, and on other days he would be absent. The uncanny phenomenon puzzled the crew, and many said that the mysterious man was the devil.

An altogether different fellow was Captain Edward England, the weak pirate. The pirates' historian, Captain Johnson, describes him as being "one of those men who seemed to have had such a share of reason as should have taught him better things." He was no poltroon, and what marked him as a failure in his profession was an inclination to be too humane to his victims. He would intercede for his prisoners with his crew, a virtue that made him unpopular among those who had no mind to love virtue. He was content with moderate plunder, but in this he was generally overruled by his comrades. In 1719 he took many prizes, and in the year following there happened the incident which brought about his downfall. In the Indian Ocean he captured a ship, and he, or rather his crew, took prisoner the master, a Captain Mackra. Some of the men were for slaying the unlucky captain, but England befriended him to the extent of assisting him to escape. That was altogether too much for the pirates, and they voted him a disgrace to the calling. With three other men they marooned England at Mauritius, whence they eventually escaped to

Madagascar in a little boat made of staves and odd pieces of wood. Here they seem to have spent their days living on the charity of the pirate colony, for nothing was ever heard further concerning them.

Some pirates win from us a reluctant admiration for their courage, but others are such poltroons or bear such sinister reputations that we cannot read of their exploits without a feeling of loathing and horror. Some were so devoid of any human feelings of mercy that we experience a real sense of pleasure when we read that the wretches were finally hanged. Our sense of justice is satisfied.

Benito de Soto was such a man. The tale of his deeds fills us with a horror so deep that even the knowledge that he was no coward does not soften the edge of dislike for such a monster.

He was one of the last of the traditional pirates, flourishing, as he did, less than one hundred years ago, when piracy on the high seas was a dying profession. With the growth of maritime passenger traffic, through the opening up of colonies overseas, public opinion demanded that more stringent measures be taken to stop piracy. For hundreds of years merchantmen had sailed in constant fear of pirates, until the European Powers woke up to the need

for taking more energetic measures against these pests. Sloops-of-war, armed brigs, Government cutters, and even fast frigates were sent to do ocean police duty and harry the pirates off the seas. It took time, but slowly they had to give way to the forces of law and order. By the beginning of 1800 most of the regular sea-routes were free from pirates, except in those waters where the adjacent countries, such as North Africa and the Spanish Main, did not exert themselves, or were not strong enough to suppress the pirates operating off their coasts.

Among these latter-day rovers was Benito. He originally hailed from Portugal, but we first hear of him as a young man sailing before the mast in a brigantine named the *Defensor de Pedro*, from Buenos Ayres for West Africa on a slaving voyage. This was in 1827.

De Soto must have already exhibited a genius for leadership, for we hear of him scheming with the mate of the slaver to seize the ship and maroon the captain and those who refused to join the mutineers. The plot was successfully carried out when the brigantine anchored off the African coast, the leaders forcing the captain and eighteen men into the longboat and ordering them to row ashore. This boat was capsized in the breakers while its occupants were trying to land, with the result that every man was drowned.

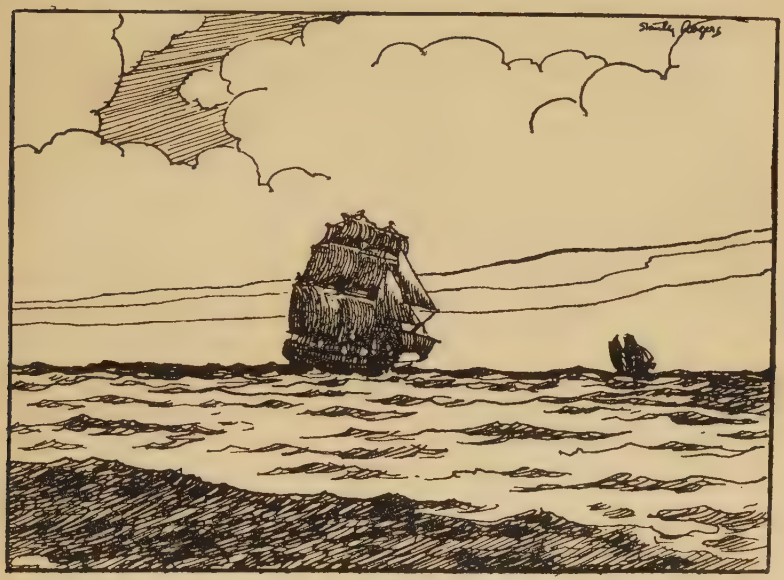
Twenty-two men remained in the ship with the leaders of the mutiny, who ordered the vessel to put to sea without delay. Feeling a desire to celebrate their new freedom, the mutineers broke into the spirit stores, and every man on board became helplessly drunk—except de Soto. Greedy for power, he proceeded to take advantage of his opportunity by coolly shooting the mate dead and proclaiming himself captain. His career from now on became a series of episodes of the most callous description. As a bloodthirsty ruffian he outdid the worst of his predecessors. His

speciality was plundering ships and sinking them after the helpless crews were fastened under the hatches. From among the number of vessels he had captured in the Atlantic he had taken a fancy to a fast-sailing brigantine with raking masts, which he renamed the *Black Joke*.

Tiring of western waters he sailed in search of new fields to exploit and terrorize, and chose the track of the richly laden Indiamen as they sailed homeward bound up the Atlantic opposite to the mainland of Africa. His reputation spread, and the tale of his deeds grew so sinister that merchantmen from India formed convoys at St Helena to continue the passage home.

In the year 1832 such a convoy left St Helena for mutual protection while they sailed northward. There were eight ships, with the Indiaman *Susan* in the van. Being unequal in speed, four of the vessels gradually drew ahead, while the barque *Morning Star*, of Scarborough, with twenty-five invalided soldiers and a few passengers on board, lagged behind. Within three days the four leading ships were out of sight ahead, but the *Susan* remained behind as escort to the lame duck, the *Morning Star*. The little barque being a very slow sailer, the flagship had to furl nearly all her canvas in order to keep back with the other vessel. The *Susan* herself was not a large vessel, as her tonnage was only 600, but the pace of the *Morning Star* was so slow that the *Susan's* captain, after sailing in company with the barque all day, signalled good-bye, and she proceeded on her course at her normal speed. For nearly two days the *Susan* sailed on alone without coming up with the others of the convoy, but on the morning of the second day she raised a large, rakish-looking brigantine. She looked suspiciously like the dreaded *Black Joke*, and the suspicion was soon confirmed when the stranger ran up the black flag and gave chase. Her deck was crowded with armed men, and a long gun was seen being prepared for action.

But the *Susan* had eight guns of her own, which were run out, to the obvious discomfiture of the pirate, who after sailing at a safe distance for an hour or so sheered off in the opposite direction. Fortunately, Benito did not know that, though the *Susan's* guns were shown so bravely, there was no powder on board with which to fire the shot. It was a narrow escape.



Coming along behind was the laggard *Morning Star*, unaware of the proximity of the *Black Joke* until she actually sighted her at dawn a day or two later. Every one anxiously watched the suspicious craft. Would she chase the Indiaman or would she continue her present course, which was rapidly taking her beyond the horizon to the west? The passengers and crew waited in wretched suspense while they watched the distant vessel to see whether she would alter her course.

They had not long to wait. The stranger altered her

course, and was soon seen to be bearing down upon the *Morning Star*. The captain crowded on all the sail he could to escape, but the black brigantine quickly overhauled her and was soon within firing distance. She hoisted false colours and ordered the Indiaman to heave to, but when she saw the order ignored she ran up the flag of Colombia and fired a gun. The second shot damaged the *Morning Star's* rigging and wounded some of her crew, whereupon her captain, seeing that resistance was hopeless and might inflame the pirates to taking a fiendish revenge, ordered the colours to be struck, and the ship hove to.

What follows is too horrible for belief if it were not for the fact that there were many witnesses to the events of that morning. It is sufficient to say that Benito, a tall, dark figure standing on his own quarterdeck, ranged his brigantine close up to the *Morning Star*, and ordered the captain and mate on board the *Black Joke*, where he killed them with his cutlass and in the sight of the people on both vessels. He then permitted his rascals to board the *Morning Star*, where they committed the most fiendish excesses. Their lust for cruelty satisfied, they thoroughly looted the ship of stores, clothing, and treasure, which they sent on board the *Black Joke*. They then proceeded to wreck the Indiaman by cutting up the rigging, sawing through the masts, and finally boring holes in her bottom, after which they returned to their own vessel and sailed

ALLFARTHING
WANDSWORTH

away, no doubt feeling that she would quickly sink and take with her the unfortunate people on board.

But the Indiaman did not sink. All the afternoon she rolled in the ocean swell like a wounded bird. With no one at the wheel she drifted, a masterless derelict, her rigging cut to pieces and her decks deserted. For long after the pirates had departed there was not a sound heard on board the *Morning Star*, the terrified people fastened below not daring to show themselves on deck for fear of some new treachery. As the hours passed and no sound was heard from the decks above, the imprisoned people took heart and succeeded in forcing open a hatch-cover. Cautiously reconnoitring, they found the ship indeed deserted. The pirates had actually gone, but with them had gone the compass and navigating instruments, and, what was worse, all the food and fresh water in the ship. Benito had done his work thoroughly.

With neither water nor food the people in the *Morning Star* could not have lasted long had not succour come quickly. A new mystery would have been added to the records of the sea had not the waterless, foodless derelict ship fallen in with another vessel before it was too late. The next morning, however, a ship was seen which fortunately answered the signals of distress from the Indiaman. The other vessel bore down to the derelict, and when within hailing distance she backed her mainyard and hove to. Quickly a boat was lowered, and very soon food and casks of water were being passed up to people on the *Morning Star*. The other vessel stood by until a jury rig was set up on the Indiaman, after which the two bore company until they entered London River some weeks later.

After leaving the *Morning Star* in the belief that she would sink, Benito de Soto sailed northward, intending to make for a Spanish port where he could sell his plunder and refit his brig. On the way he chased several ships

and captured a brig which he sank after looting her and killing the crew. On a dark night off the Spanish coast he ran the *Black Joke* ashore and had to take to the boats. With his crew he safely reached the land and in the course of time arrived at Cadiz, where the police became suspicious and arrested him and six of his crew. But they all contrived to escape, and Benito, separating from the others, went to Gibraltar.

Here Nemesis steps in and satisfies our desire for justice. Benito, walking about the narrow streets of Gibraltar town, was recognized by some of the soldiers that were on the *Morning Star*, in spite of an elegant disguise he had adopted. The soldiers at once informed the authorities, and de Soto was arrested on suspicion. In his chests at his lodgings were found many things taken from the *Morning Star*. There was enough evidence to hang him ten times over. Among other things in his possession was the pocket-book of Captain Souley, whom he had murdered in such a callous fashion. He was tried at Gibraltar and received the inevitable sentence of death. One is forced to add that he died courageously, with a dramatic shout of "*Adios todos!*" in farewell to the mob as he jumped off the tumbril to hasten his end.

CHAPTER XIV

More Pirates

SAILORS do not possess overmuch respect for landsmen, and when Major Stede Bonnet went to sea his men took no trouble to conceal their opinion of the landlubber who would a-sailing go. But it did not much matter, for poor Bonnet was as mad as a hatter. They say a nagging wife drove him crazy, and, however this may be, it is certain that some private discontent caused him, in middle age, to abandon a prominent social position and take up the desperate game of piracy. Nor did he need the money, for he owned much property in the Barbados, where he lived as a wealthy planter. He was a retired Army major, much respected and moving in the highest local society, and his deviation from the conventional path greatly shocked all his friends, though they put it all down to the distemper of his mind. At his own expense he fitted out a sloop of ten guns, called the *Revenge*, and with seventy men went cruising off the coast of Virginia, where he soon took a number of prizes.

Then sailing to Gardiner Island, New York, he landed

some men, and after buying necessary stores departed peaceably. While off Carolina on returning south the crew took advantage of his lack of sea-knowledge and mutinied. At this time they fell in with Blackbeard, who, pretending friendship with Bonnet, contrived to get control of the *Revenge*. A little later, however, Blackbeard decided to take the King's pardon, and when Stede Bonnet followed suit he was able to get back the sloop, of which his arrogant friend had made good use.

Temptation proving too strong for the major, he was soon back at the old business, now sailing under the name of Captain Thomas. His parole went with his old name, and henceforth with unrestrained licence he plundered the shipping off Virginia and the Delaware River. From the Delaware he stood south for Cape Fear River, where he stayed two months, refitting the sloop, now ironically called the *Royal James*.

While here the people of South Carolina discovered his presence, and with the Governor's permission a Colonel Rhet offered to go and endeavour to capture the pirate. With two sloops he set sail, and on the way to Cape Fear River fell in with more than one vessel whose captain reported having been looted by another pirate named Captain Vane. On hearing this Colonel Rhet went in search of Vane, but while doing so came upon three vessels whose masts appeared on a low-lying point of land. They were Stede Bonnet's *Royal James* and two of his prizes. In the chase that ensued both pirates and pursuers found their ships aground in the shallow waters of the river, but, Colonel Rhet's sloop being within pistol-shot, an exchange of fire took place for several hours, after which the pirates surrendered. They were taken prisoners and placed in a watch-house under guard, as there was no local prison. Two days later Bonnet and another man eluded the guard and escaped. A sum of seven hundred pounds was offered

for his capture, and several boats containing armed men went in search of him, with the result that in a few days he was a prisoner once more. This time they took care to guard him securely, and in due course Bonnet and thirty of his men were condemned to death by the court. In delivering the sentence the judge treated the major to a long sermon on the wickedness of piracy and loose living. As the day of execution approached all his spirited manner left him, and he wrote a supplicating letter to the judge begging for his life. This brought him considerable sympathy from the people, especially the women, and many citizens of the province were for making an appeal, but the Governor persuaded them that it would be a mistaken act of mercy, and so Stede Bonnet was allowed to suffer the extreme penalty for his deeds.

Reading the inglorious history of the pirate leaders, we cannot fail to notice the marked individuality in their characters. The methods of all the pirates were very much the same, but their temperaments and characters varied enormously. Some were men of fine spirit whom some early chance had led into piracy, and who never asked for better than they gave, but others were cowards and braggarts, mean-hearted rascals, who snatched the plunder and ran. Such a fellow of unworthy mettle was Captain Charles Vane. After a brief career of successful piracy in 1720, in company with a sloop commanded by his associate Yeats, he was deserted by the latter off the coast of South Carolina. Having been treated with small respect, this worthy took advantage of a dark night to desert Vane and run up the river ten leagues from Charleston. The sloop, being of shallow draught, was able to go where the larger vessel could not follow, but Vane, in a fury against an act he would have had no scruples in committing himself, vowed death to the deserter and gave chase in his faster brigantine. Finding that Yeats had retreated across the

bar, Vane cruised at the mouth of the river, hoping to catch his absconding lieutenant. It was while in these waters that his looting of the local shipping brought Colonel Rhet out looking for him with two armed sloops, but, as has already been related, Rhet came upon his original quarry, Stede Bonnet, and Vane escaped. Yeats had meanwhile taken the King's pardon, and makes his exit from the story.

Leaving the coast Vane next fell in with a French man-of-war, whom his crew wanted to fight, but he, deeming the warship to be too strong for his brigantine, urged that they should put on all sail and escape. In this he was backed by some of the crew, but the majority bore the decision with sour looks and voted their leader a coward. He had gained his point and escaped a duel with the Frenchman, but the disappointment rankled among his cutthroat associates. After a conference among themselves they deprived him of command, and put him and his few supporters aboard a small sloop, recently captured, and bid him look to himself. They elected in Vane's place one John Rackam, now by courtesy Captain John Rackam, or Calico Jack, of whom more later. Vane and his handful of men cruised among the islands in their little sloop, making several petty captures, until they lost their vessel on the coast of a small, uninhabited isle in the Bay of Honduras. Vane managed to save himself, crawling half drowned ashore, where he subsisted destitute of nearly every necessity for several weeks. One day a ship arrived at the island and men came ashore in a boat. The castaway expected to be taken on the ship, but the captain had recognized in the gaunt and ragged man the notorious pirate, and refused to be softened by his pleadings, " for," said the captain, " if I took you, you would begin plotting against me with my crew." At that he left the wretched Vane to perish on the island. But Fate had arranged it otherwise. The marooned man was not to die of starva-

tion, for another ship anchored off the shore a little later, and the captain, not recognizing the famous pirate, put him to work as a seaman. By chance this vessel fell in with the ship of Captain Holford, the man who had recently refused to rescue Vane. Holford was invited to dine on board the other vessel, and as he passed along the deck toward the master's cabin he recognized among the crew the ferret face of Charles Vane. When he was informed

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whom he had aboard his ship the surprised captain was glad to turn the ex-pirate over to the custody of Holford, who took him over to his own ship as prisoner. In time they came to Jamaica, where the unlucky Vane was tried, condemned, and hanged, and the Jamaica settlers breathed freely again.

A unique and very famous pirate was Captain Avery, a Devon man. He was unique because, though a rather sorry creature, with none of the claims to distinction possessed by such a man as Bartholomew Roberts, of whom we shall speak later, he succeeded in making one of the richest single captures in the history of piracy.

John Avery, called Long Ben and born about 1665, was bred to the sea. When mate of the 30-gun privateer *Duke*, of Bristol, he plotted with the crew to depose the captain

and go a-roving. The master and six of the crew were put in a boat off the African coast and told to make their way ashore, after which Avery joined with two sloops and set a course for Madagascar, whence he cruised in search of victims. Near the River Indus a tall sail was espied, and the pirates at once gave chase. The strangers hoisted the colours of the Great Mogul and made some attempt to get away, but on finding themselves unable to escape, struck their colours. The prize proved to be a remarkable one. She carried a number of important members of the Great Mogul's court, including his daughter, on a pilgrimage to Mecca. The holds were full of rich offerings for the shrine of the Prophet, and it was said that the specie alone totalled 100,000 pieces of eight and an equal number of sequins. These rough men had never imagined that such a fabulous treasure would fall into their hands, and there was great excitement on board the pirate ship when the extent of their wealth was realized.

Capt. Avery

The prize was plundered and let go, though it is said Avery took the Mogul's daughter with him. Whether this is true or not, it is known that when the news of the catastrophe to the ship reached the Great Mogul he was so infuriated that he caused the East India Company much uneasiness by his threats to drive all their agents and settlers out of India, in revenge for the robbery and sacrilege of the English corsair.

This, then, was Avery's great and only exploit worth noting. Chance had given him a prize of enormous value and brought him a notoriety that would never be forgotten. Ever after he would be known as the man who took the Great Mogul's ship. But from now on his star, which shone for such a short time, was on the wane, until the time came when the pirate whose name had been on every one's lips lived a pauper, and died unknown.

After letting the Mogul's ship go the three pirate vessels sailed in company for Madagascar, there to unload the treasure and count the spoil. On the way Avery sent aboard his two sloops inviting a council, as he had a proposal to make to his lieutenants. They then came aboard the *Duke*, where Avery suggested they should put all the treasure in his, the larger vessel, for its safer keeping. As this seemed reasonable, they fell in with the proposal, and within a short time the whole of the treasure was transferred to the *Duke*. Now the crafty Avery set to tampering with the easy conscience of his crew, hinting that if they took advantage of the night to make off with the loot they would all be so much the richer. The crew at once agreed to this treachery, and when darkness fell they steered on another course, and by daylight the sloops were nowhere to be seen. With the hold full of the Mogul's treasure the *Duke* was sailed for America, where in 1696 Avery landed at Boston, after bribing the Quaker Governors for permission to do so! Here the *Duke* was sold, and, buying a sloop, Avery set sail with some of his men for Ireland, as it had been found difficult and dangerous to try to dispose of the jewels in Puritan New England. In an Irish port the sloop was sold and the company dispersed, Avery himself going to England with his jewels. At Bideford friends advised him to put the treasure into the hands of some wealthy merchants of Bristol, who could better dispose of it than Avery. The merchants took the

jewels, and giving him a small advance of money, they departed with many promises. But, as Captain Johnson says, the merchants proved to be "as good pirates on land as he was at sea," for, beyond a few trivial sums which his begging letters brought him, Avery never got anything further out of those men of Bristol. To stop his clamouring they threatened to disclose his theft, and so the famous Captain Avery was reduced to beggary, and died in extreme poverty in Bideford, the town to which he had come with a chest full of potential wealth.

Captain Avery has been called unique, but that word can be applied still more aptly to "Captain Misson," a French pirate who, born a gentleman, protected his family name by the adoption of this pseudonym. In what way he was unique will be seen presently. Belonging to an ancient French family, he did well at school, but in his teens developed such a desire for roving that his father humoured his wish and sent him on board the man-of-war *Victoria* as a volunteer. He at once took to the life and became an able young midshipman. During a stay in Italy, to which country the ship had gone, Misson met a Dominican priest, with whom he formed an unwholesome friendship. This ecclesiastic had most unclerical ideas, and soon threw off his habit to join the *Victoria* as a sailor, after he had obtained Captain Fourbin's permission. Returning to France, the ex-priest, Caraccioli, and young Misson left the ship, volunteering later to serve on board the man-of-war *Triumph*, bound for the English Channel to cruise for prizes. This vessel, after indifferent luck, returned to France.

During their roamings together the apostate priest had preached the doctrine of anarchy and atheism into young Misson's ears, until he became imbued with the older man's ideas. So the devil and his apt apprentice continued to voyage together until the precious pair had poisoned the

minds of many weak men who could not perceive the fallacy of their plausible rhetoric.

Then came an incident that gave Misson command of a ship without his having to soil his hands with mutiny to attain that position. The pair were again in the *Victoria* when that ship fell in with the English frigate *Winchelsea* off Martinique, and in the action which followed most of the French officers, including the captain, were killed. The others would have struck but for Misson, who took up the sword and, ordering Caraccioli to act as his lieutenant, encouraged the men to fight on. The engagement continued until the English ship blew up.

When the *Victoria* had sailed away Misson assumed command, and the Italian saluted him as captain. The two of them now carried out their plan to take the ship, and Misson, addressing the crew, announced that he would force no man to join him against his will. Those who were not with him would be set ashore at the first opportunity, but to his gratification the impressionable men gave a loud cheer and resolved to sail with their new captain. So began Misson's remarkable career of piracy. It was remarkable because all his pillaging was done under a white banner instead of a black flag, and despite the fact that he took £200,000 from one ship he would have no man call him a pirate. He was also unique in the list of pious regulations he framed to govern the crew, in his gentlemanly behaviour, and his proneness to weep if any one of his victims was killed in an attack. He was always ready to preach and pour forth a flow of hypocritical oratory that completely mesmerized his ignorant hearers. He was, in effect, an eighteenth-century politician on the high seas. Nevertheless he seems to have had his big moments, though these may have been inspired by his exaggerated love of the dramatic.

With his stolen wealth, after many years of adventure,

he set up a sort of Utopia on the coast of Madagascar, which he called Libertalia. This community continued to develop by the addition of recruits, until one night hordes of natives swooped down and massacred the whites and their native wives. Misson was among the few survivors, Caraccioli, his lieutenant, being killed, and the broken leader, with a few men, set sail for America in a small

sloop, in company with the notorious pirate Tew, but their vessels were overtaken by a storm and Misson's sloop foundered with the loss of all hands.

No pirate almanac would be complete without the name of Charles Bartholomew Roberts, who died fighting after having taken in his day over four hundred ships. With all his crimes one is bound to say, " Here was a man!" He was not a hypocrite, nor was he a showman, nor wantonly cruel, but having committed himself to piracy he put his whole mind to the business. When, as a young man, his ship was taken by pirates and he was made to serve as a pirate, he was at first very averse to the life. But when the captain was killed, and young Roberts, by his obvious fittedness for the position, was elected to the dead leader's

place, he said that "since he had dipped his hands in muddy water and must be a pirate, it was better to be a commander than a common man." If it is permissible to employ such an expression one may say that he was an ideal pirate, for he possessed great courage and his character was tempered with just sufficient humanity to appeal to our sentiments. His first ship was the *Rover*, which mounted thirty guns and over twenty swivels, and carried more than a hundred men as crew. After a few minor adventures he performed a feat of almost incredible daring. It was no less than attacking a Portuguese treasure-fleet in the harbour of San Salvador. The fleet was guarded by two men-of-war, but with the show of naked cutlasses they were so taken aback that nothing was done to stop the pirates. Roberts sailed away with a rich prize containing among other things 40,000 moidores, a large jewelled cross intended for the King of Portugal, and a great quantity of merchandise.

CAPTAIN ROBERTS

While he was examining the Portuguese prize at one of the islands in the West Indies there came word of a brigantine off the coast with a cargo of provisions. Being in need of food stores, Roberts took a sloop with forty men and hastily set sail in search of his prey, leaving Kennedy, his second-in-command, in charge of the prize. The sloop cruised about for days without sighting the brigantine, and was, during that time, blown thirty leagues to leeward. Not being stocked with food and water for a prolonged cruise, Roberts sent a boat to the island for a supply of these necessities, and when the boat-party returned they

brought the news that Kennedy had stolen away with the galleon. Roberts was furious, but it was the fortune of war and he had to endure the blow as best he could. A new pirate company was formed, articles were signed, and Roberts soon made a few small captures with the sloop. Then they had the misfortune to fall in with two British West Indies men-of-war, who gave the pirates chase, and Roberts was so hard pressed he had to heave the guns overboard to lighten the sloop in order to get away.

ROBERTS' JOLLY ROGER

Thereafter he was the sworn enemy of the islanders, and caused to be made a new jack bearing a picture of himself with each foot on a skull, under which were the letters A B H, A M H, signifying "A Barbadian's head" and "A Martinican's head." Roberts had a *naïve* conceit in flags. The Jolly Roger he lifted from the plane of the commonplace black square to the elaborate affair just described. Another of his jacks bore upon a black field the figures, in white, of Bartholomew and a skeleton holding an hour-glass between them. The Jolly Roger affected by the pirates of the Spanish Main was not necessarily black, but it invariably bore either a skull and cross-bones or a complete skeleton. Some pirate jacks were yellow, others were red; if yellow the skull would be in black, but if the field was red the device would be in white or yellow. With the familiar crossed thigh-bones and skull, devices such as a red heart or spear or an hour-glass would be included.

To return to Bartholomew Roberts, he is described as

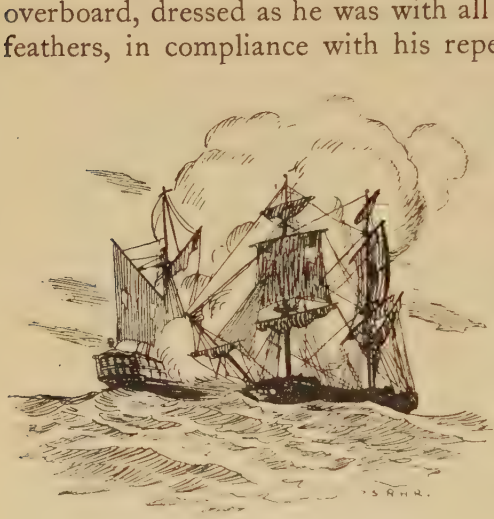
a tall black (*i.e.*, swarthy-complexioned) man, about forty years of age. He was fond of saying, " Damnation to him who lives to wear a halter," and " A merry life and a short one," which boasts he entirely lived up to.

His end was characteristic of his life. With the ship the *Royal Fortune* and another vessel he was surprised by the English frigate *Swallow*, which, in company with the *Weymouth*, had been searching for him off the west coast of Africa for some weeks. The *Swallow*, sailing alone, discovered the pirate vessels anchored inside the mouth of the Gabun River, and to lure out her prey pretended to run away. Roberts' consort fell to the bait and gave chase. The *Swallow* lured the pirate well out to sea, where gunfire would not be heard from the island, then put her yards aback and opened with a broadside. The pirate was taken as prize, and after two days spent in setting up her torn rigging she was sent off with a prize crew, while the *Swallow* returned to find the *Royal Fortune*. The pirates saw the frigate's masts over the land, and descended to the cabin to inform Roberts, who was enjoying a savoury dish of salmagundi[1] with a guest. At first, unbelieving, he continued to entertain his company, but when the man-of-war appeared round the land and showed her guns, Roberts became at once serious and prepared for action. Having no wish to be caught like a rat, he slipped his cable and steered out to meet the frigate, knowing better than any one the odds against him.

Dressed in his best suit of crimson damask velvet, with a red feather in his hat and a gold chain, from which was suspended a diamond cross, round his neck, he stood on the quarterdeck as his ship sailed toward the enemy, his famous black ensign flying at the mizen-peak. Standing defiant, he gave the commands to his men until he fell

[1] More commonly called Solomon Gundy. It is a mixed dish of pickled herrings, chicken, beef, olives, and garlic, with oil, vinegar, etc.

across the tackles of a gun with a pistol ball in his throat. The helmsman, not seeing the wound, left his post to swear at his captain, bidding him stand up and fight like a man. But when he found his leader was dead he gave way to tears in the anguish of grief. Before the pirates surrendered to the *Swallow* they threw the body of Roberts overboard, dressed as he was with all his jewellery and fine feathers, in compliance with his repeated requests during his life. So ended the most gallant, if not the most virtuous, of all buccaneers.



Now we come to a trio of pirates whose fortunes were linked together for a time at least. The three figures referred to are no less than the famous Calico Jack and the two women pirates, Mary Read and Ann Bonny, whose adventures make, in their entirety, a most diverting tale. Calico Jack, so named because he wore a jacket and breeches of calico, was actually Captain John Rackam, who, it will be remembered, was elected to take Vane's place when that rogue was deposed after avoiding a fight with the Frenchmen. In his most arrogant days he refused to accept the King's pardon, but later, when he lived a desperate and hunted life, he was glad to take advantage of the amnesty once so haughtily rejected. During this brief experiment in respectability he met Ann Bonny, who, though already married, was persuaded without much difficulty to run away with him. To fly with his *inamorata*, Rackam broke

his parole, stole a sloop by boarding it in the night, and sailed away, Ann, of course, with him. Thereafter he plundered many ships until he was caught and taken to Port Royal, where he was hanged. Ann was born at Cork in Ireland, her father being an attorney-at-law, who early in his married life emigrated with his family to Carolina. There the mother died, and Mistress Ann grew up to keep house for her father. She was a difficult, abnormal girl, with a fierce and courageous temper. Her hasty and impulsive nature led her into marriage with a worthless sailor, at which her father disowned her. The married pair moved to the Island of Providence, where they lived together until Rackam came along.

The sort of woman that Ann was can be judged from her remark to Rackam when she visited him in the condemned cell. She said she was sorry to see him there, but if he had fought like a man he need not have been hanged like a dog.

Mary Read was an altogether more human person. Her mother had brought her up as a boy to conceal the secret of her birth, which was out of wedlock. Mary's mother had married a sailor who shortly after the marriage went to sea and was never heard of again, leaving his wife with a new-born son. Some time after that the mother took her infant son, who was not yet a year old, to another part of the country, promising her friends she would return one day. While she was away Mary was born, and her mother was greatly troubled how she should present the new baby to her friends. It happened that the first-born died, and then came the idea of passing the baby girl off as the boy to her friends, who were unaware of Mary's existence. When Mrs Read returned to her former home, after an absence of three or four years, they beheld what they thought to be the little son and greatly marvelled at his comeliness. The trick had succeeded, and the mother

entered into this lifelong conspiracy of deception. Once a boy always a boy, so Mary was told the secret of her birth to encourage her to conceal her sex.

As the girl grew up, outwardly a boy, she experienced many vicissitudes. She joined a man-of-war, deserted, enlisted in a regiment in Flanders, took part in the wars, and at length fell in love with a young soldier, to whom she disclosed her secret. After the wars she assumed woman's clothes, and the pair were married. They set up an eating-house near Breda which they called the Three Horseshoes. In this business they prospered until the young husband died and the inn began to fall upon lean days. Mary now assumed male attire again and joined a Dutch regiment, but after a time tired of this and took ship to the West Indies. The vessel was captured by pirates, and Mary joined them, but later the whole crew sued for the King's pardon, and once more she was out of occupation. Looking round for something to do, she enlisted with some privateers, who after they were at sea did what privateersmen often did, and rose against their commander. Mary was once more a pirate, and her conduct during an attack was marked by her fiery courage.

The interesting coincidence is that the present captain of the pirates was no other than our old friend Calico Jack, who had with him his lady-love, Ann Bonny, disguised as a sailor. All this would have had nothing to do with Mary if it had not been for the fact that the false Ann fell in love with the handsome young sailor whom she thought to be a man. This made matters so difficult for Mary that, in order to put a stop to the embarrassing attentions of the other, she had to discover her sex to Ann and come to some understanding. Meanwhile Rackam had become jealous and threatened to kill the lovers, so, to prevent that, he too was let into the secret, which, fortunately, he kept from the crew.

For a time Rackam sailed about making many captures and taking by force recruits for his ship. Among these was a captain with whom Mary was quickly to fall in love. He was not interested, and she, without being too anxious to disclose her sex, tried what arts she could to win him. But all was without avail until at last she let him know she was a woman. At once he was awakened to a new interest and soon became deeply in love with her. Love had raised Mary to heights of sacrifice and made her fine and noble, so that all her thoughts now were for her beloved. Once, when he was challenged to a fight ashore by one of the pirates, to save her man's life she picked a quarrel with his challenger and in the dispute shot him dead.

When the pirates were all captured Mary had to stand her trial with the rest, but on being found to be a woman she was pardoned, and shortly afterward died in prison.

CHAPTER XV

Treasure-ships

LYING deep in the mud and sands of the sea-bed, untold millions of treasure, in the shape of bullion, specie, and jewels, are buried beyond all hope of recovery. Pistareens, moidores, pieces of eight, sequins, doubloons, and English guineas lie among corroded cannon, chains, anchors, shot, and ancient muskets deep under black mud and hundreds of fathoms of water, or in the comparative shallows under yellow sand—much of this latter not out of reach of recovery. Among old records, mostly in the form of faded charts or letters, has been found a great deal of information concerning buried treasure, some genuine and some purely fictitious, which has caused many a staid man to leave his safe and humdrum existence to go adventuring for a buccaneer's hoard. An old shellback on his death-bed, in gratitude to the good Samaritan who befriends him in his last hours, bequeaths to his friend a stained and much-worn piece of paper bearing cryptic marks, and in a dying whisper bids him go and search as the directions indicate and he shall be made rich beyond his most extravagant dreams.

Captain Voss, of *Tilikum* fame, once received a letter

from an old friend, a sailor who, not expecting to live long, made him a present of a chart of treasure said to be buried on Cocos Island. How he went in search of it and why he failed in its discovery is told in his book *The Venturesome Voyages of Captain Voss*. Nor is his experience unique, for Cocos Island has lured more treasure-seekers than any other authenticated treasure-spot known. The Vlieland Sands, the coast of Nova Scotia, the Spanish Main, Tobermory Bay, Madagascar, the coast of Pondoland, South Africa, Vigo Bay, and the waters of Ireland have all been visited by salvage parties, at one time with divining rods and primitive apparatus, now with deep-sea diving-dress and expensive boring tools.

Scattered about all over the oceans of the world lie sunken steamers, the victims of submarines and mines, many with fortunes in their strong rooms. From the *Laurentic*, sunk off the Irish coast, several hundred thousand pounds in treasure have since been recovered by modern diving apparatus. But the *Lusitania*, which lies off Old Kinsale Head, is too far below the surface to be explored by any diving gear yet invented. Within her barnacle-encrusted hull lies a vast wealth of bullion that may at some future date be recovered. For one of the virtues of gold is that it is not injured by long immersion in sea-water.

Despite the hundred authentic cases of sunken treasure within our own time, these happenings at our very door fail to thrill us as do accounts of lost treasure of a past age. The Tobermory galleon or the *San Philip* has an undeniable lure that our modern iron galleons, lying in their hundreds below the sea, quite lack. We never grow old

enough to become indifferent to the picturesque romance of iron-bound chests and skeletons in armour, stately ships and buried gold.

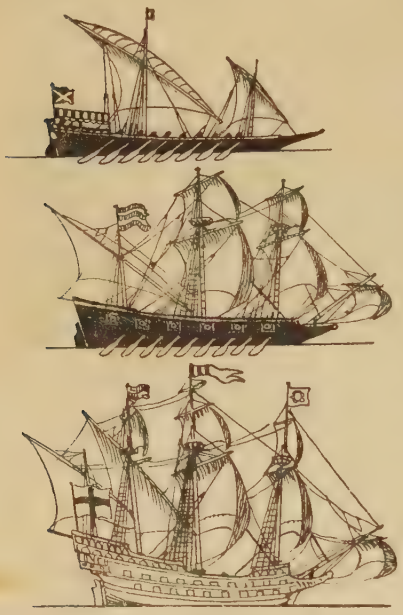
When Spain claimed possession of the West Indies and the Isthmus of Darien and all that area which came to be known as the Spanish Main, she aroused jealousy among other European nations, and when she showed herself to be a bad colonizer this jealousy was considered by her enemies to be justified. The Spaniards became fair game for all those who had no share in the vast quantity of gold

she brought home from the Isthmus. What she took from the Aztecs her enemies took from her. Having most of the gold and silver in her keeping, it is natural that most treasure-ships were Spanish. Who ever heard of an English treasure-galleon? We did not wring gold from the Indians; it was our part to play the sea-robber and take fat prizes whenever we could, either in so-called legitimate warfare, as privateers, or quite openly as confessed pirates. But it was not only the English who were the enemies of Spain, for there were the Dutch, whose foothold in the West Indies was a source of friction and desultory warfare. This gave the Hollanders an opportunity to even up old scores, especially in the matter of what they owed the Spaniards for the horrors of the Inquisition in Flanders. So it must have been very sweet indeed for the Dutch Admiral Pieter Heyn when he captured the Spanish silver-fleet.

PIETER HEYN

It was in 1628 that he waited, at the head of twenty-four Dutch war vessels, for his quarry off Cuba. In his youth he had been a prisoner of the Spaniards, and for four years he had been forced to row in their galleys, so his grudge against them was not unnatural, and his revenge, though long delayed, was exceedingly complete when it was consummated. He had received word that the silver-fleet was about to sail for Spain with bullion from the mines in America. The Spanish convoy became scattered through bad seamanship, and the more valuable part of the fleet, consisting of four galleons and eleven other vessels, was chased by Heyn. They took refuge at Matanzas, Cuba, hoping to land the treasure and hide it in the jungle before

the Dutch came up. But they were captured in the harbour before the precious cargo could be got ashore, and Spain lost treasure to the value of four million ducats. The loss was a ruinous one; but the gain to the Dutch West India Company was enormous, and no doubt Pieter Heyn received a handsome reward, for he soon bought himself a fine house at Delft, intending to retire. But at the request of the Government he returned to sea the following year to fight the French, and he was killed in a battle off Dunkirk. There is an old print in the Scheepvaart Museum in Amsterdam showing the huge galleons in the harbour at Matanzas, surrounded by their smaller escorts, while sailing down upon them are the nimble vessels of the Dutch. The galleons are shown as monsters towering above their enemy vessels, a disproportion prompted probably by the patriotism of the artist, who wished to suggest that a Dutch man-of-war could vanquish a much larger vessel, although it should be said that in this case the Spanish were considerably outnumbered.



GALLEY, GALEASS, AND GALLEON

Spain suffered an even greater loss of treasure seventy years later; in fact, the greatest of all the many misfortunes to her treasure-fleets during the three centuries in which she imported gold and silver from America. I refer to the loss of the plate-fleet in Vigo Bay in 1702. During

two hundred years Spanish galleons, singly and in convoys, had crossed the Atlantic loaded with treasure, taking it home to Spain; and throughout this period they were waylaid and robbed by the pirates of the Spanish Main. These galleons were the true argosies of romance; their holds were full of plate, bullion, and gold and silver bars, as well as coin in pieces of eight and gold moidores. In the year 1702 there sailed for Spain from the ports of Vera Cruz, Cartagena, and Porto Bello the greatest treasure-fleet that has ever gathered together in the history of the world. For three years no plate-fleet had sailed to Spain, during which time treasure had accumulated at Cartagena and other towns. Such wealth was not safe on this lawless coast, and immediately an escort of French men-of-war came out to convoy them home. The galleons sailed loaded to the water-line with treasure to the value of nearly £30,000,000. In the archives at Madrid and in the British Admiralty records there is all the documentary proof one could wish for, apart from the tangible evidence divers have brought up from the bottom of Vigo Bay.

There were forty ships in the fleet, seventeen galleons and twenty-three French men-of-war as escort. The galleons were under the command of Don Manuel de Velasco, and the warships under the Comte de Chateau-renaud. News reached England that the plate-fleet had at last sailed for Spain, and Queen Anne, with business-like promptitude, dispatched Sir Cloudesley Shovel with twenty-seven men-of-war to attack it. The Spaniards and French managed to manœuvre away from the British Admiral and ran for Vigo Bay, which they reached safely. Once there they were prepared to receive the enemy and defend themselves. A boom of chains and top-masts was stretched across the harbour-mouth, soldiers lined the coast, and everything was done to ensure the safety of the treasure—everything except getting it ashore, the most important

measure of all, it would seem. But through delay and stupidity the treasure lay aboard for some weeks while the Spaniards were debating among themselves who should be sent from Madrid to receive it. While the matter was still undecided the English fleet, under Sir George Rooke, combined with the Dutch fleet to go into Vigo Bay and fight the Dons in their own front yard, as it were. First, they landed troops on the coast, who took by assault one of the harbour forts and ran up the flag as a signal. As soon as the attacking fleet saw the signal they sailed—with half a gale blowing—right through the boom and into the harbour among the French and Spanish. Within thirty minutes the bay was on fire with blazing galleons, fireships, and men-of-war. The flames licked up the gilt and carvings of the galleons, their magazines blew up, and many sank at their moorings. The invaders tried to save the treasure, and Don Manuel de Velasco signalled that those galleons not sunk should be set on fire at once.

The casualties were one British man-of-war burnt, thirteen hundred men being wounded or killed among the invaders; but they took thirteen Spanish and French ships. So soon as the following day the victors sent down divers (not in diving-dress, of course), but they brought up but

little of value, for the diving was done under constant gun-fire from the shore. Sir George Rooke brought to London the galleon *Tauro* intact, and there she was unloaded of plate and specie to the value of £200,000. Many companies have been formed to raise the treasure, and so far but a small part has been recovered—about £300,000 in plate and specie altogether.

One of the most interesting of treasure-ship stories is that of the galleon of Tobermory Bay. There is said to lie at the bottom of that little bay in the Island of Mull, Scotland, the Great Armada galleon *Florida* or *Florencia*. The *Florida* was one of the larger galleons belonging to the Great Armada that had come to invade England, and on board her, besides the crew, were several hundred Spanish soldiers; and, what is more interesting to us, a great quantity of gold and silver is said to have been in her hold.

VENETIAN ARGOSY

When the Armada was driven northward and scattered, many ships left their bones to rot on the Irish coast, but the *Florida* was spared that ignominy only to endure another. One can picture the storm-battered galleon, driving through the grey seas toward the rocky Hebrides, her decorated sails split and patched, the gilded carving of her hull broken and tawdry in contrast to her recent splendour. Nor was she any happier inside than out, for

the story goes that she lacked both water and food. And so, arriving at Tobermory Bay, the first thing her captain did was to send a boat ashore with a note to the chieftain, Lachlan MacLean. The note (one wonders in what language it was written) demanded provisions, and the demand was accompanied by threats. Such high-handed methods only resulted in bringing a reply from the chieftain to say that they should receive provisions after they had

had a lesson in courtesy. The barbarian would show the courtier points in manners. The captain of the galleon, a swarthy man, Don Fareija, cooled down at hearing that the clans were gathering to repel further landings of the Spaniards, and sent a request in more courteous tones, saying that he would pay in gold for what provisions they might receive.

Now at this time Lachlan MacLean was carrying on a family feud with the clan MacDonald, and, needing assistance to defend his castle, made a bargain with the Spanish captain. For the loan of a company of soldiers he would agree to supply certain provisions for the galleon. So it came about that through the bleak land there marched soldiers from sunny Spain, side by side with the dour Northerners, to help them thrash MacLean's enemies. The Scottish chieftain, it appears, made good use of his

armoured Spanish allies and went about the country fighting and pillaging with right good will.

In the meantime Fareija grows impatient and asks for his troops back. He wishes to sail. The district offers poor entertainment for a gentleman of Southern blood. MacLean replies that the captain may have his troops back when the account has been squared. There was a promise of payment in gold as well as the use of the troops. Fareija vows that the gold shall be paid, at which MacLean returns the soldiers, keeping back three officers as hostages. Now he sends on board one of his own kinsmen, Donald MacLean, to collect the payment. Stepping on to the deck of the galleon, young Donald is surprised to find himself escorted below and locked up, virtually a prisoner. It sounds uncommonly like treachery, but Fareija feels he is within his rights. The barbarians hold three of his own good men; he shall hold one of theirs. Lachlan remains adamant; he must have his payment first. The captain is equally stubborn, and they remain thus until the Spaniard can wait no longer. His patience is exhausted, and he decides to sail, taking young Donald with him. Another high-handed proceeding, but international law was then a simpler thing than it is now. But he reckons without his host. The young Scot discovers that his cabin is next to the powder-room, and in some manner contrives to make a hole through to the powder-store.

The galleon is weighing anchor, the banners are loosed to the wind, the Dons are happy—they are leaving this grey land for their own warm South, and the Scots standing on the shore watch the great ship begin to move away as the wind fills her sails. And now the tragedy happens, for, as the natives watch the stately ship, the air is filled with a sudden deafening roar; there is a flash of flame, and out of a great cloud of smoke that covers the

heavens bodies, spars, and shredded canvas fall into the water.

Donald MacLean had lighted the train and avenged his people. Before the fateful morning came he had contrived to send word ashore of his dreadful intention, and from that day to this the story of his deed has been handed down by his kinsmen. That is the substance of a remarkable and highly romantic tale. How much is legend and how much fact it is hard to say. If truth is stranger than fiction, then it may be true, but let us hope, for the lady's sake, that the tradition that the galleon had on board a beautiful lady of high rank is only a myth.

In the State documents of Scotland are recorded certain facts touching on this history. The galleon is referred to as the *Florida*, but among the list of names of the Armada ships that name does not occur, though there is a vessel, one of the most important of the Spanish ships, called the *Florencia*, commanded by a grandee of the first rank who always dined off gold plate. Names get sadly mishandled when written in another language. It is known that in the Italian contingent of his Most Catholic Majesty's Armada

was a large and richly fitted galleon sent by the Duke of Tuscany, known as the Florentine galleon. She joined the Spanish fleet at Lisbon. So much for documentary evidence.

It is known that on February 5, 1641, the Duke of Argyle obtained all rights to the vessel from Charles I, with certain provisions, and that in 1666 two large brass cannon, one iron gun, and six other cannon were raised from the scene of the wreck. In 1680, with the then recently invented diving-bell which had been imported from Sweden, a man named Miller succeeded in finding the galleon's rudder, a silver bell, some guns, and an anchor. For perhaps a hundred years there were disputes about rights and contracts, while from time to time more relics were brought up, including a quantity of pewter ware, but no treasure. I believe that in modern times a few gold and silver coins have been sucked up by dredgers, and in the past a silver candlestick appeared among the finds of the searchers, but nothing of greater value. Yet these few discoveries are surely evidence enough that a large ship of the Great Armada did take refuge and sink in that obscure bay.

A treasure-ship whose history is fully known and authenticated in every detail is, or was, the *Lutine*. She was the former French man-of-war *La Lutine*, a 32-gun frigate captured by Admiral Duncan and renamed simply *Lutine*. She was employed in carrying a large consignment of gold and silver to the Continent from England when she was wrecked on the Dutch coast over a hundred years ago.

In the month of September 1799 the Treasury sent a letter to the Admiralty to say that a large sum of money was to be dispatched to Texel to pay the British troops stationed there, and that merchants were sending bullion for correspondents in Hamburg. The Admiralty instructed

Admiral Duncan to send a cutter to Gravesend to receive the bullion, but there was obviously some sort of misunderstanding, for transporting money for merchants was not the Navy's job. However, as soon as the bankers and merchants heard that a man-of-war was to be sent they

took advantage of such an opportunity for safe transport to increase their consignment of bullion. When the gallant Admiral heard that the bankers had increased the amount of gold to be sent he felt the increased responsibility, and decided to send a larger ship, the *Lutine* being chosen.

The valuable cargo was insured by Lloyd's, and, after being put aboard the *Lutine*, left Yarmouth on October 9

for Texel and Hamburg. Immediately the ship had left Admiral Duncan sent word to the underwriters to inform them of the fact; but before they got his letter the *Lutine* was lying, a broken wreck, on the outer bank of the Vlieland Passage on the coast of Holland. The Vlieland Passage lies between the islands of Vlieland and Terschelling, and the *Lutine* had gone ashore there in the dark during a heavy gale from the north-north-west. She went to pieces during the night, taking down with her the whole of the crew and a few civilians aboard, with the exception of two men who were washed ashore, though one of these shortly afterward died. The only survivor was a Mr Shabrack, a notary public, who seemed so shaken by the experience that he was not able to give any valuable evidence to the court of inquiry afterward. There was no one else to tell how the disaster happened, so we are left to conclude that it was the old story of heavy weather and a lee shore. Add to this a night as dark as a pocket, and you have as dangerous a combination of circumstances as you could find. The low-lying Dutch coast is difficult to see at a distance even at the best of times, and a hundred years ago, when coast lights were few and far between, the chances of running ashore were greater than they are these days. When news of the wreck reached England the Admiralty sent instructions to the British commander at Texel to take what steps he could to recover the treasure; while Lloyd's Committee sent a salvage crew for the same purpose, for the insured cargo was, by right of law, the property of the underwriters. While the Navy and the insurance people were presumably discussing the formalities the local fishermen busied themselves on the wreck, which was partly exposed at low tide, and gathered what was literally a golden harvest. The Dutch Government now stepped in, and some sort of agreement was arrived at. The fishermen were allowed to carry on their salvage operations on condition

they rendered up a certain percentage of the treasure. To ensure this agreement's being kept, Government agents were sent to keep an eye on the operations. Though only able to work in fine weather, the fishermen made such good use of their chances that £80,000 in bullion and specie was salvaged in eighteen months. It was in gold and silver bars, Spanish silver and gold pistoles, Louis d'or, and

A FRIGATE OF 1780

guineas. In 1801 the drifting sands covered up the wreck so completely that all salvage operations were stopped indefinitely. For thirteen years the grave of the *Lutine* was left undisturbed, and then an enterprising fellow, with the exotic name of Pierre Eschauzier, obtained permission from the Dutch Government to seek the treasure left among the ribs of the English frigate. This unlucky man dredged the spot for seven long years and succeeded in bringing up but a handful of coins. Another attempt—this time with a diving-bell—was made in 1821, but with even less success than the last efforts. Now Lloyd's appeared again and set to work diving and dredging for their lost property, but, meeting with no tangible encouragement, their interest

waned, and other hopefuls appeared from time to time with pet theories on finding treasure; but all met with conspicuous lack of success. The years rolled on until Lloyd's again determined to try to locate the wreck. This was in 1857, and the *Lutine* had been under the sea for fifty-eight years, during which time but a comparatively small part of her treasure had been recovered. The gales had lately moved the sands in such quantities that the black ribs of the frigate were again uncovered at low tide, and scores of fishing craft hovered round the wreck like sea-birds, waiting for what they might pick up. So large had become the fleet of fishermen that patrol boats were sent to keep order among this floating populace. Lloyd's agents worked on the wreck from 1857 to 1861, and brought to the surface £22,000 in treasure, besides a number of interesting relics of the ship herself. One of these is the *Lutine's* bell, which now hangs in Lloyd's offices in London, where it can be seen by those who wish visible proof of its existence.[1] Buried deep in the Vlieland sands there still remains the greater part of the treasure, and no doubt other attempts will be made to find it before the story of the *Lutine* has become but a legend of the past.

Another treasure-ship whose loss has points in common with that of the *Lutine* was the *Télémaque*. They were both French-built, both wrecked on sands, and both lost the whole of their crews.

When the Bastille fell Louis XVI, fearing the loss of his throne, made plans for the future by gathering what treasure he could get and sending it aboard the man-of-war *Télémaque*. Besides a vast amount of gold in coin, the plate

[1] It is sounded now only to announce the fact that a ship is missing.

and jewellery belonging to two wealthy abbeys was included in the rich cargo. Where the ship was to be sent is not known, as she left Rouen in great secrecy on January 1, 1790. She never reached her destination, however, for three days later she ran aground in bad weather near Quillebœuf and sank with all hands. She had run on to a bank of quicksand, and her broken remains were soon covered by them. Some efforts were made to raise her before the sands had taken complete possession, but, the attempts failing, the wreck and her treasure were left to their fate and presently faded from man's memory. Fifty years later an Englishman named Taylor, an engineer living at Le Havre, read about the *Télémaque*, and bestirred himself to try to recover the treasure. Getting permission from the French Government, he formed a salvage company, and in 1842 started salvage operations. The resting-place of the wreck was discovered, ship's timbers were brought to the surface and a few gold coins, so they say, but the work presently ceased through lack of funds, and the treasure has remained undisturbed to this day. Some years ago certain people in France seriously discussed driving a tunnel under the sand and coming up under the wreck, a very novel plan which never came to anything.

Down under fathoms of water and sand the *Télémaque* remains, keeping her secret to herself, like thousands of other stately ships that have gone down, never to be seen again. If any know the secrets of their treasure it is the silver fish that dart among their crumbling bones, and they will never tell.

A GLOSSARY OF SEA TERMS

AFTERGUARD. The ' old man ' is the captain and head of the afterguard, who are the officers. This select company live aft, the crew live forward. If an officer has worked his way up from a humble beginning he is said to have ' come aboard through the hawse-pipe.'

ANCHOR (sometimes called the MUDHOOK). The *sheet-anchor* is the most powerful anchor carried aboard ship, and as it is popularly supposed to be used as a last resource (though not necessarily so) the term has come to be used in conversation in that sense.

BARQUE. A three-masted (or larger) vessel square-rigged on all but the aftermost mast, or mizen.

BARQUENTINE. A three-masted vessel square-rigged on fore-mast, but fore-and-aft, or schooner, rigged on main and mizen.

BEAUFORT SCALE. A series of numbers, from 0 to 12, arranged by Admiral Beaufort to indicate wind-velocity from calm to hurricane—*i.e.*, 0 = calm, 4–5 = moderate wind, 6–7 = strong wind, 10–11 = storm, 12 = hurricane.

BEFORE THE MAST. To sail, or to ship, before the mast means to sign on as a seaman and not as an officer. The crew are often referred to as ' the crowd forrard.'

BELLS. The origin of the custom aboard ship of referring to time as ' bells ' is picturesque. In the old days a boy turned a sand-glass over every half-hour, and struck a bell to let the ship's company know that another half-hour had passed. A watch was four hours long; thus the boy had to turn his half-hour glass over eight times. At the end of the first half-hour of the watch he struck one bell, at the end of the second half-hour he struck two bells, which announced a full hour, and so on to eight bells. On British ships the last watch of the day was from four to eight P.M. This was divided into two halves called ' the dog-watches,' which was done to change the watches, so that the same lot of men would not have to take the middle watch of every night.

BIGHT. The bend or loop of a rope. An inlet or bay.

BILGE. The lower part of a vessel, the bottom.

BINNACLE. The case or stand in which the steering compass is fixed.

Blackbirder. A slave-ship.

Blue Nose Ship. One from Nova Scotia.

Blue Peter. The blue flag with a white square in the centre that is hoisted to the fore-truck when a ship is about to sail.

Bowline. A loop in a rope tied in a certain manner. A rope on a square sail. An extremely useful knot which serves to form a loop at the end of a hawser or rope.

Bowsprit. The spar projecting forward from the bows.

Brace. A rope for controlling the yard.

Brig. A two-masted vessel square-rigged on both masts.

Brigantine. A two-masted vessel square-rigged on fore-mast and fore-and-aft rigged on the main.

Broach to. To slew round when running before the wind. It is a dangerous situation in which to get.

Cape Stiff. Cape Horn.

Cape of Storms. Cape of Good Hope.

Clincher-built. The method of building a boat in which the planks overlap.

Clipper Ship. Fast sailing-ship.

Coble. A small open boat for sailing and rowing. Seen off the Northumbrian coast.

Companion. The entrance and covering over the staircase below.

Crew. The 'idlers' are the carpenter, sailmaker, cook, etc., who are permitted to sleep all night. They do constant duty all day, and do not have to stand night watches except in an emergency call of "All hands on deck." Of these the cook is the 'doctor,' the sailmaker is the 'sails,' and the carpenter is 'chips.' The 'doctor' cooks in the 'galley,' and gets his 'hard-tack' out of the 'lazarette' or 'cuddy,' and his beef or pork, called 'salt-junk,' out of the 'harness cask.'

Crossing the Line. The act of crossing the Equator from one hemisphere to another. It is frequently accompanied by a ceremony, in which Neptune comes aboard and initiates in boisterous horse-play all men who have not crossed the Equator before.

Cuddy. A small cabin, sometimes called the cook-house.

Davits. The light cranes from which swing the ship's boats.

Davy Jones. When a sailor dies it is well known that he has gone to Davy Jones's locker, though his mates are more likely to use the commoner phrase 'he has slipped his moorings.'

Dinghy. A small open boat usually attached to a yacht.

Doldrums. The area of calm in the Atlantic.

Dolphin Striker. The small spar below the bowsprit. As it points down-

ward, plunging into the sea as the ship pitches, it is aptly named. 'With the bone in her mouth' refers to the curl of white water thrown aside by the prow of the ship as she cleaves the waves.

Dory. A small open boat used by the Grand Banks fishermen.

Down-easter. An American sailing-ship.

Equinoctial Gales. These are supposed to occur at the time of the equinox, and are looked forward to with apprehension by timid passengers on the Atlantic. They are more fictitious than real. Observation has shown that there is no unusual prevalence of gales during the equinoxes.

Falsework. The ram, or beakhead, on certain early ships.

Fathom. Six feet, a measurement of depth.

Fo'c'sle. *I.e.*, forecastle, the forward deck.

Food. The food served to the hungry crew is christened with quaint and expressive names. There is baked hard-tack and molasses, called 'dandy funk,' and 'lob-scouse,' a stew made of broken biscuit, potatoes, and salt meat. For drinking there is black coffee sweetened with molasses, or tea, known as 'water bewitched.'

Fore-and-aft Rig. Sails running in the direction of centre line of the vessel.

Fore-mast. The first mast from the fore-end of a ship.

Freeboard. That part of the vessel's side that is above water. The *counter* is that part of the stern that overhangs the stern post.

Frigate. A fast-sailing cruiser of the old days, carrying between twenty and fifty guns.

Gaskets. Short ropes by which the sails when furled are made fast to the spars.

Gig. One of the small boats belonging to a ship.

Gunwale. The upper edge of an open boat.

Halyard. A rope by which a flag, sail, or yard is hoisted.

Hooker. Square-rigged ship.

Hull Down. When only the masts of a ship can be seen over the rim of the ocean the ship is said to be 'hull down.' A fast ship may appear astern in the morning, gradually overtaking a slower vessel, and by evening be hull down ahead.

Jib-boom. A spar running out beyond the bowsprit.

Jolly-boat. A small open boat used for errands between ship and shore.

Jury Rudder. A rudder erected in emergency to take the place of a ship's rudder lost in a hurricane. A similar definition applies to a jury mast.

KEELSON. An addition to the keel laid inside a vessel.

KNOT. This term is often employed erroneously. It is used in reference to speed only, as so many knots per hour, and not for distance covered. For the latter purpose a nautical mile is used. This is one-sixtieth of a degree of latitude, which on the Equator measures 6046 feet. The land mile is 5280 feet.

LANYARD. A short length of a rope.

LARBOARD. The old name for port, but was abolished because, being similar to starboard in sound, it frequently led to confusion. *See* STARBOARD AND PORT.

LASHINGS. 'Deep-sea lashings' are the small lengths of rope yarn that sailors tie round the cuffs and ankles of their oilskins in bad weather to keep the water out. A soul-and-body lashing is a small rope tied round the waist.

LEEWARD. The *leeward*, or lee side of a vessel, is the opposite side to that upon which the wind blows. The *windward* is the side from which the wind comes. A *lee shore*, on the contrary, is a shore upon which a wind blows. If a vessel gets on a lee shore there is not much hope for her. But being *under the lee of the land* is quite a different thing. In this case your vessel is in the shelter of the land, as when a wind is blowing over the top of cliffs from inland. Again, a *lee tide* runs with the wind, but a tide under the lee runs opposite to the wind. *Lee boards* are flat boards let down on either side of a wall-sided vessel such as a barge. They serve as a deep keel.

LIFEBOAT. An unsinkable boat designed for saving life in heavy seas.

LOG-LINE. A contrivance used for measuring a ship's speed through the water.

LONGBOAT. The largest rowing-boat carried on a ship (eight or ten oars).

LONGSHOREMEN. Boatmen or old sailors who pursue their vocation ashore. It is a term used with all respect.

MAINMAST. Middle mast on a three-masted ship.

MAINSAIL HAUL. This term serves equally as an order in tacking ship or in reference to looting or securing booty.

MARLINGSPIKE. A pointed instrument used for separating strands of rope when making a splice.

MARTINGALE. The stay from the jib-boom and down to the dolphin striker.

MATHEW WALKER. A sailor's knot.

MIZEN-MAST. Aftermost mast on a three-masted ship.

MONSOON (Arabic, *mausim*). The seasonal trade-winds of certain latitudes of the Indian Ocean; but they are by no means gentle zephyrs like the Atlantic trade-winds.

MOONRAKERS. The small sails that are at the very top of tall-sparred ships. They are only set in light airs, and belong to the class of small extra sails, such as studding sails, that are named, collectively, 'flying kites.'

OFFING. The sea in the distance, as outside a harbour. To keep a good offing is to keep well away from the shore.

PAINTER. A rope by which a boat is tied to a quay.

PAMPERO. The cold south-west wind that blows over the vast plains of Southern Argentina. This wind extends sufficiently far out to sea to raise a gale in the track of shipping running down to that part of the South American coast.

PINNACE. An open boat used in the navy and propelled by oars or steam.

POOP. The raised deck at the stern.

PORT. *See under* STARBOARD.

PRAM. A small square-ended rowing-boat.

QUARTERDECK. The deck toward the stern.

'RUNNING HER EASTING DOWN.' This refers to the time when a ship is making a passage across the Pacific, to Australia for example. Between parallels 40° and 60° a westerly gale blows practically all the year round, and when a sailing-vessel gets into these latitudes she keeps in them all the way across, and so 'runs her easting down.' The expression 'the Roaring Forties' refers to these forties of latitude.

SCHOONER. A two-masted vessel fore-and-aft rigged on both masts.

SCUPPERS. Openings in the bulwarks to carry off any water on the deck.

SEA. A *head sea* comes rolling toward the ship; a *following sea* comes rolling up behind. The expression 'being pooped' refers to a big wave coming over the stern. When this happens the ship is quite likely to founder. The helmsman is washed away, the gear is smashed, control of the ship is lost, she broaches to, and then, as likely as not, another vessel is posted at Lloyd's as missing. A *beam sea* is, as its name suggests, a sea that causes the ship to roll as she is sailing more or less parallel with the waves, and not across them as in the case of a head sea.

SEAS. Waves.

SHEET. A rope attached to a sail.

SHELLBACK. An old sailor.

SHIP. A three-masted vessel square-rigged on all masts.

SHROUDS. Strong ropes supporting the masts.

SKY PILOT. A parson.

Slip the Cable. Cast the cable loose, leaving the anchor on the bottom. It could be recovered if the cable was attached to a buoy before letting it go.

Slop Chest. The chest that contained the clothing and gear that the captain sold to the men when they needed to supplement their wardrobe. The prices usually meant a good profit to the captain.

Spanker. The fore-and-aft sail on the mizen. Also called the driver.

Splice the Mainbrace. To take a drink of something stronger than water —usually grog.

Spouter. Whaling-ship.

Spun Yarn. A form of string made by twisting the fibres of old rope into yarn.

Square-rig. Sails supported on yards lying across the centre line of the vessel.

Starboard and Port. On looking forward starboard is right and port left. They are distinguished at night by a red light on the port side and a green light on the starboard side. The *bows* are the extreme forward part of the hull; the *beam* is roughly the middle third, the widest part, and the *quarter* is commonly that third abaft the beam. A ship ' on her beam ends ' is lying at such an angle that the masts may be at forty-five degrees and the deck like a steep gabled roof. When a ship is on her beam ends the crew can do nothing but cut away the masts and trust in Providence. If, during a gale, a ship ' broaches to ' through bad seamanship or a lost rudder, then she is in a bad way. In fact, she has slewed round into the trough of the waves and stands a very good chance of capsizing.

Stays. Supports of wire or rope.

Stern Sheets. Floor covering at the stern of a small boat.

Studding Sails. Extra sails run out on square-rigged ships in light winds.

Swallowing the Anchor. When the old shellback goes ashore for good, leaving his ship for the last time, he is said to have swallowed the anchor.

Taffrail. The railing round the stern. The ' fife rail ' is a bar or rail on which a row of belaying-pins is fixed.

Thwarts. The seats in an open boat.

Top. The platform at the head of the lower masts.

Trade-winds. The gentle breezes that blow consistently in and near the Torrid Zone. Being exceedingly regular, they can be depended upon to keep the ship moving. The area of their greatest influence is from the Equator to 28° S., and from about 3° to 35° N.

Truck. The ball at the top of the mast.

TYPHOON (Arabic and Hindustani, *tufan*; Chinese, *t'si fung*). A violent hurricane, a cyclonic storm in Asiatic seas, especially off the coasts of China, Japan, and the Philippines. It may be well described as a wind stirred up by the devil.

VOYAGE. A complete journey, out and return. A *passage* is the journey one way. You make a passage to New York, but if you sail from Liverpool to New York and back you have then made a voyage.

WAIST. The main deck between the fo'c'sle and the quarterdeck.

WAKE. White water left in the track of a ship.

WEAR SHIP. The manœuvre of putting the ship on the other tack by bringing her round stern to wind. This is a delicate business when performed during a gale.

WEATHER. The term 'weather' has several meanings, of which here are three. The *weather side* means the windward side; to *weather* another sailing-ship is to pass her on the weather side; to *weather* a gale is to have come safely through it.

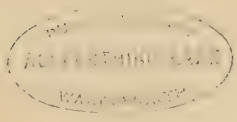
WESTERN OCEAN. The Atlantic.

WINDJAMMER. Square-rigged ship.

WINDWARD. *See under* LEEWARD.

YARD. The spar from which a square sail is supported.

YAWL. A fore-and-aft sailing-boat with a large main- and a small mizen-sail.



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